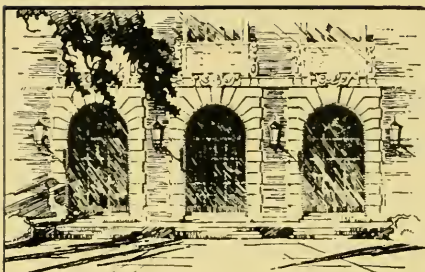


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LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY COMPANY.

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*Drake, James Drake*  
DRAKE'S  
Engineering Library

# ROAD BOOK

OF THE

## LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY,

ILLUSTRATED BY AN ACCURATE MAP OF THE LINE, AND  
BY NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS.

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LONDON:

HAYWARD AND MOORE.

BIRMINGHAM: JAMES DRAKE, 52, NEW STREET. LIVERPOOL: WILLMER  
AND SMITH, AND ROSS AND NIGHTINGALE. MANCHESTER:  
LOVE AND BARTON.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

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BIRMINGHAM: PRINTED BY JAMES DRAKE, 52, NEW STREET.



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Engineering Library

TO THE

CHAIRMAN AND DIRECTORS

OF THE

LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY COMPANY,

This Volume

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BY

THE PUBLISHER.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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WHAT has led the Publisher of this volume to indulge the hope of being able to provide an acceptable guide to the London and Birmingham Railway, has been the highly gratifying reception which has already been given to three editions of his Road Book of the Grand Junction Railway. Accordingly, he sends forth this Road Book with the pleasing conviction that he is sending it among persons who, by the acknowledged merits of its predecessor, as well as by the high character of numerous other works of a similar nature, which have issued from the same press, are already prepossessed in its favour. Should a generous public, by the manner in which they receive it, show that the estimation in which they have hitherto held his labours remains undiminished, the Publisher

will consider that all his exertions during the many months in which he has been engaged in preparing it for publication, have been abundantly rewarded.

The descriptive part has been written with the utmost carefulness; and, as the whole line was leisurely traversed for the express purpose of obtaining the most correct information, its accuracy may be confidently relied upon. The character of the scenery through which the railway passes is somewhat minutely described; an account is given of every neighbouring town and important village; and all other interesting objects which can be seen from the line are mentioned in the order in which they appear in view. The Writer has also continually aimed at leading the mind of the traveller into pleasant and instructive trains of thought, and furnishing him with interesting subjects for familiar railway colloquy. With respect to the Illustrations, the name of the artist, H. Harris, Esq., by whom the views were taken, exclusively for this work, will doubtless be deemed a sufficient guarantee for their faithfulness, judi-

cious selection, and intrinsic merit. They have also been engraved by one of the first London artists, and expense has not been spared in order to render them worthy of the noble undertaking which they are designed to illustrate.

By the completion of this volume, a Road Book is provided for the whole line of railway from London to Liverpool and Manchester; which, besides proving a useful hand-book for the traveller himself, will also, it is hoped, be found an agreeable companion, by those who seek to enjoy the pleasures of travelling while comfortably seated at their own firesides.

BIRMINGHAM, *August 1, 1839.*



THE  
ROAD BOOK  
OF THE  
LONDON AND BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY.

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CHAPTER I.

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LONDON.

As the pleasure we derive from travelling, depends chiefly upon the means we have of gratifying the curiosity which it excites, when we are so fortunate as to have an intelligent companion to point out the spots renowned in history or celebrated in poetry, to inform us as to the productions of the country and the manufactures of the towns, and direct our eye to the most beautiful objects in nature and remarkable works of art, we are placed in the most favourable situation for deriving all the enjoyment from travelling it is capable of affording, and are perhaps almost inclined to complain of reaching the place of our destination too speedily. With the hope that such a companion would be found in this little volume, by those who are about to take a trip by the London and Birmingham Railway, we would at once introduce our readers to this

wonder of modern times, were we not too proud of the metropolis of our native land to leave it altogether unnoticed. It will not, we hope, be considered an unpardonable digression, if, before we commence our journey, we briefly glance at this city, the object of a world's admiration.

LONDON, if we may place any credit in the ancient Welch chroniclers, is as old as the times of Homer ; for, according to them, it was founded by Brute, the great grandson of Æneas, the Trojan hero. If this be true, London may vie with Rome in point of antiquity ; and Troy has had the honour of giving birth to the two mightiest cities the world has ever beheld. But it is more probable, that, for very many ages after the period mentioned by the chronologer, the banks of the Thames, where the mistress of the world now sits, presented no other prospect to the eye of the wandering savage than that of a wild, unhealthy marsh, the undisputed possession of poisonous reptiles and ravenous beasts. The first time London appears on the page of authentic history is upon its being burned to the ground by Boadicea, after its temporary evacuation by the Romans. Thus London enters upon the stage of history in the interesting character of a sacrifice offered up by vengeance upon the desecrated altar of British independence. It would appear as if this circumstance had in it something ominous ; for few cities have suffered so severely from fire and pestilence as London has, since it was burned by Boadicea. Five times has the plague swept through its crowded streets and thinned its inhabitants ; and



the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 17th centuries were all marked by the occurrence of awfully wide and destructive conflagrations. Yet none of these calamities have been able to check its rising greatness. From the ashes of every conflagration it has arisen more vigorous and beautiful than before. In 1377, the number of its inhabitants amounted to 35,000; in 1680, to 670,000; in 1801, to 864,000; and in 1831, to 1,500,000,—a population which far surpasses that of the most renowned cities of ancient or modern times. Various are the causes which have swelled it to this unparalleled greatness; but the chief one has undoubtedly been its commerce. Its situation on the banks of a noble river, and at a safe distance from the ocean, renders it peculiarly available for purposes of trade; and, the circumstance of being the metropolis of a great and wealthy empire, necessarily creates a brisk internal traffic. Even so early as the twelfth century, a learned monk of Canterbury, in “A Description of the noble City of London,” speaks of Arabia, Scythia, Egypt, and Babylon, as pouring their costly merchandise at her feet. If, then, London in the twelfth century, when the metropolis of only a third part of Great Britain, be spoken of in terms so glowing, what language can we find sufficiently elevated to describe London in the nineteenth century, reigning, as she now does, over wide extended dominions in Asia, Africa, and the New World? Into her warehouses thirteen thousand vessels are on an average continually pouring the riches of the world, and through the hands of her merchants property to the value of one

hundred and twenty millions sterling annually passes. Her citizens furnish foreign princes with the means of making war; her merchants regulate the markets of the world; and her manufacturers produce articles which can nowhere be equalled, and which every nation under heaven is anxious to obtain. In London, also, sparkles the bright crown of "the fair virgin enthroned in the west;" and in its halls the unrivalled aristocracy of England, and the chosen representatives of British freemen, regularly assemble to decide the fate of nations, and consult for the welfare of a hundred million subjects.

Great and powerful as London is, it is daily progressing; and the numerous railways which are now entering it, will doubtless give considerable impulse to its increasing grandeur. The following railways, which are either already completed, or in course of construction, meet in it as their grand focus:—the London and Birmingham, the Great Western, the London and Southampton, the London and Croydon, the Central Kent, the London and Greenwich, the Blackwall Commercial, the Great Eastern, and the North Eastern railways. Commercial prosperity will necessarily result from the rapid communication with all parts of the empire, which the completion of these great arteries will open; and from commercial prosperity will infallibly flow increase of population, and extension of boundary. The benefits of these railways, in a political point of view, will also be considerable; since speedy intercourse between the different parts of an empire has a natural tendency to consolidate and keep it united. Should railways

become as extensive on the Continent as they are in England, the political consequences will be of still greater importance. Indeed, as quick and easy international intercourse powerfully tends to produce the coalition of small states into large empires, may we not suppose, that when Europe has been intersected by railways it will present to the eye of the beholder the august spectacle of one vast and mighty republic, firmly bound together by these iron bands?

Lest the reader should begin to think we are detaining him too long from his journey, we will now suppose ourselves in front of the beautiful Grecian propylæum, which forms the entrance of the London and Birmingham Railway, and where accordingly our duties do properly commence.

## CHAPTER II.

## LONDON TO WATFORD.

Seventeen and  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

THE historical account of this grand national undertaking may be comprised in a very few words; for the history of a railway is like that of the life of a philosopher—rich in important results, but poor in interesting narrative. The project of constructing a railway between London and Birmingham was first formed in the year 1825; it slumbered, however, till 1830; and it was not until 1835 that the company, which had been formed to carry it into execution, could obtain the sanction of parliament. By the act which was then obtained, the company were authorised to raise £2,500,000; and if more should be required, to borrow an additional sum of £835,000, which sum, by a subsequent act, was increased to £1,000,000. By a third act, obtained on the 30th of June, 1837, power was given to raise, under the common seal of the company, another million sterling; and towards the end of 1838 half a million was borrowed; so that the whole cost of the undertaking has been no less than five millions sterling. The railway was opened throughout the entire line on the 17th of September, 1838. The talented engineer by whom it was designed, and

under whose superintendence it has been completed, is Robert Stephenson, Esq., whose name, with that of his illustrious brother, will henceforth be honourably linked with those of Arkwright and Watt.

Camden Town was originally intended to be the locality of the London station; but the company, desirous of keeping the merchandise and passenger departments separate, and of bringing the public nearer to the centre of business, afterwards resolved to extend the line; and at an expense of a quarter of a million produced it as far as Euston Grove. Even this, however, was insufficient to satisfy some discontented individuals, and a "City Railway" has been projected to whirl the impatient traveller like a Congreve rocket over the heads of the astounded citizens of London, and to cause him to alight within a few yards from St. Paul's. We do not think, however, that the good people of Gray's Inn Lane, notwithstanding this scheme is sanctioned by act of parliament, need be very much alarmed by the apprehension of having their midnight slumbers disturbed by the rushing past their garret windows of a train of "City Railway" carriages.

The offices and other buildings at the Euston Grove station occupy an area of seven acres, and have been erected in a style of great magnificence. The noble edifice which forms the entrance does honour to the public spirit of the directors; and Mr. P. Hardwicke, from whose designs it was erected, deserves the thanks of every admirer of Grecian architecture, for having exhibited the unadulterated Doric style on a scale of grandeur unequalled in modern times, and scarcely

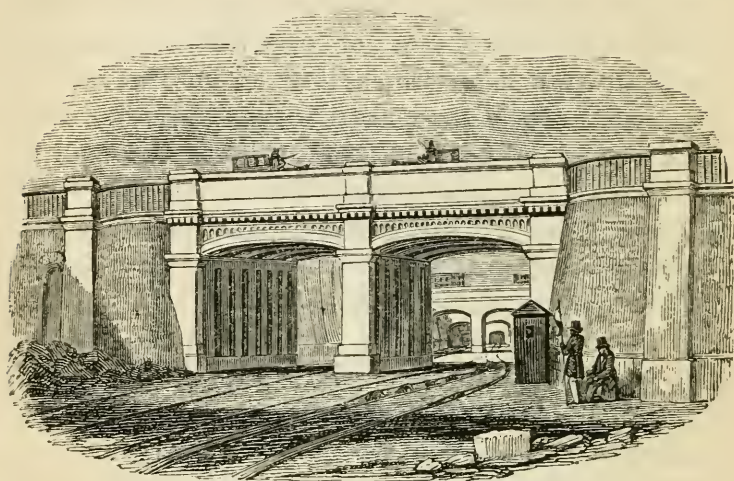


surpassed by classic Athens herself. The diameter of each pillar is eight feet six inches ; the height of the gateway, measured from the top of the pediment, is seventy feet ; and the entire line of frontage, including the piers and the two lodges connected with them by massive gates of bronze, measures 320 feet. We will now enter the spacious court yard which measures 100 feet by 470, and passing through the booking offices, proceed into the spacious shed where the carriages await our arrival. Here a scene is presented which to the stranger is most striking and bewildering. The whole scene appears more like one of enchantment than reality. The light and lofty arch thrown across the spacious court seems upheld by fairy hands ; the huge row of triple-bodied carriages resembles nothing we are accustomed to see in the world ; and the power of self motion of which these ponderous machines exhibit signs, is rather startling to the uninitiated stranger. Upon the arrival of the night trains, this scene is still more striking ; as the yard is then brilliantly illuminated with gas. The roof of the shed is constructed principally of wrought iron ; is two hundred feet in length, and eighty in width ; and is supported in the middle by a row of cast iron pillars.

Upon examining the internal fittings up of the carriages, upon which so much of the comfort of his journey will depend, the traveller will find that the first class carriages are divided into three entirely distinct compartments, and these compartments into six divisions, (except in the mails, in which there are only four,) so that each traveller has an entire seat to himself, in which he can recline as freely

and comfortably as in the most luxurious arm chair ; and after the shades of evening have gathered over the scenery, can read the news of the day, or turn over the pages of our little volume, by the light of a lamp which is fixed in the roof of the coach. The second class carriages are, however, of a very different character. These cushionless, windowless, curtainless, comfortless vehicles, seem to have been purposely constructed so that the sweeping wind, enraged at being outstripped in his rapid flight, might have an opportunity of wreaking his vengeance upon the shrinking forms of their ill-fated occupants. At night, however, the partnership of the railway with Messrs. Rheumatism and Co. is dissolved, and even second class passengers are provided with shelter from the cold and chilling blast. But leaving this unfortunate race to their fate, we will suppose ourselves voluptuously reclining in the cushioned interior of a first class carriage, and enjoying the pleasurable sensations of a smooth, easy, and rapid motion up the inclined plane of the Grand Excavation. This excavation is made in a stratum of London clay, and is one mile in length. The curved walls which support its banks are generally between eighteen and twenty-two feet in height ; and being surmounted with iron palisading, present a very handsome appearance. The seven remarkable bridges by which it is crossed deserve a much more minute examination than the rapid flight of the trains will by any means allow. The principal are the Wriothseley-street bridge, which crosses the line at an angle of seventy-six degrees ; the Hampstead-road bridge,

the total length of which is 339 feet; and the Park-street bridge; all of which consist of iron work,

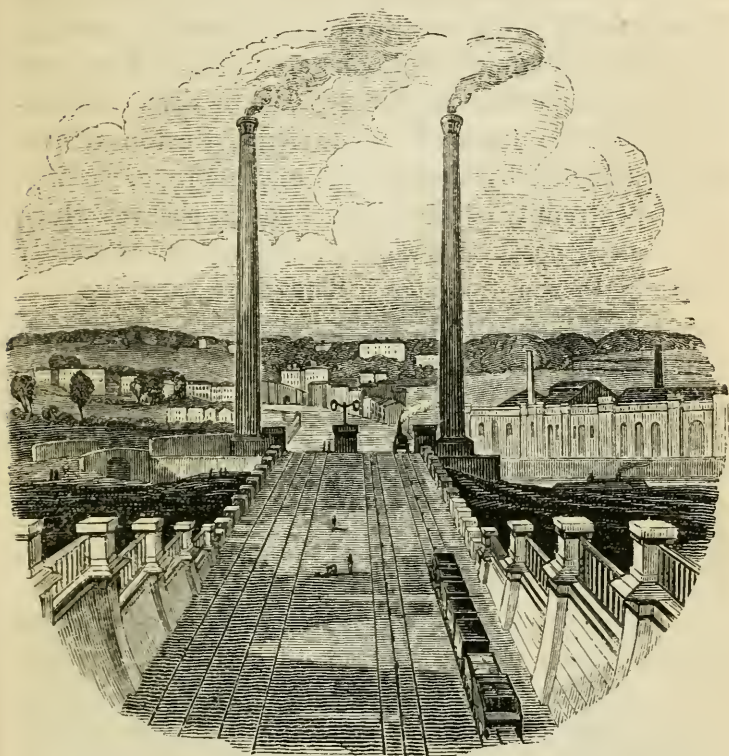


PARK STREET BRIDGE.

stone and brick work. Emerging from the excavation, we rapidly pass along the Extension Embankment; cross the Regent's canal by an elegant suspension bridge, the rails on which are only thirteen feet above the level of the water; and then enter the company's goods depôt at Camden Town. Here the scene is deeply interesting; and the commercial and scientific resources of Britain are exhibited on a truly magnificent scale. As Englishmen, we should feel greater pride in standing with a foreigner in the spacious area of this depôt, than on the plains of Waterloo, or blood-washed shores of Trafalgar. The buildings, which consist of warehouses, manufactories, offices, &c., occupy thirty-three acres of land, and will, when completed, be noble erections. The most conspicuous



and attractive objects are two tall and elegant chimneys, which stand like monumental columns on each



ENGINE HOUSE, &c., CAMDEN TOWN.

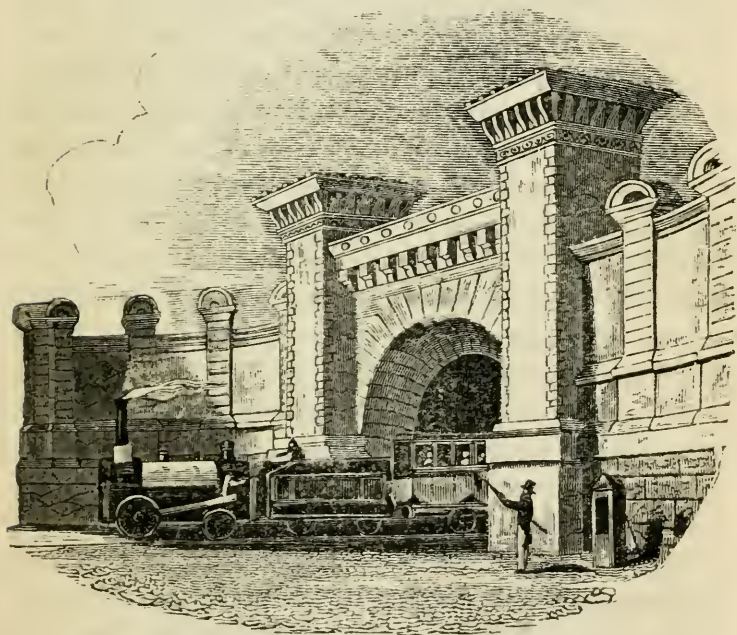
side of the line. We have only to suppose that these are pillars reared in honour of those who conceived and executed the vast works which lie around ; and nobler ideas will be suggested to the mind than could be excited by the famed pillars of ancient conquerors, raised to tell succeeding ages of kingdoms ravaged and towns demolished. It never enters, however,

into the plans of railway directors to erect monuments to commemorate their actions; they prefer adopting the motto inscribed upon the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren, in St. Paul's cathedral: "Stranger, do you seek our monument? Look around!" The real practical use of these chimneys is, to draw the carriages up the inclined plane from Euston Grove. This is effected by means of an endless rope, passing, at each extremity of the incline, round sheaves which are sunk beneath the railway, and are consequently invisible to the traveller. The stationary engines, which are each of sixty horse power, are also placed below the level of the line.

The telegraphic communication, which is opened between this station and Euston Grove, by means of electro-magnetic wires, is another instance of the enterprising spirit of the company, and, indeed, forms one of the most astonishing achievements of modern science. Not satisfied with the mighty agents we have pressed into our service, and the victories which by their means we have obtained over time and space, we must needs bring down the lightnings from heaven to carry our messages and go on our errands.

The engine to which we are now for the first time attached has checked his deafening roar, and this is a sign we are about to start. Now he begins to pant, and we begin to move; the panting grows quicker and quicker, and we move faster and faster, and in a very few moments we are bounding along at the height of our speed, with Regent's Park and Hampstead on the left, and the beautiful high grounds about Highgate on the right. The short

incline down which we are rapidly shooting brings us to Chalk Farm,—a spot celebrated, by repeated duels, in the annals of modern love and chivalry. Leaving Kentish Town on the right, and passing under Chalk Farm bridge, we enter the Primrose Hill cutting. If the traveller should now happen to look out from the window of the carriage, he will behold stretching across the line the noble entrance of the Primrose Hill tunnel. This is a bold and massive



PRIMROSE HILL TUNNEL.

structure, erected in that style of architecture which is usually termed the Italian; and consists of two wings

and a centre, raised upon a rusticated basement. If, however, the traveller should prefer keeping his seat and closing the windows, which is certainly the most advisable plan, he will find himself suddenly, and without a moment's warning, plunged into worse than Cimmerian darkness, and hurried along through clouds of smoke and vapour; amid flying sparks, jarring atoms, rushing winds, and every sign of elemental strife; whilst stunning sounds, and a rattling, clashing din, form a hubbub than which what Satan heard in his flight through the realms of Chaos and Old Night could scarcely be more terrific. But let not the most timid traveller imagine that there is any real danger; for, although appearances are rather alarming, and the consideration that fifty feet of earth are suspended above him, is somewhat startling; yet if he will close his eyes for the space of a minute, at the end of that period he will find himself, like many thousands who have daily preceded him, safely restored to the pure air and the light of day. The height and width of this tunnel are equal, namely, twenty-two feet; and its length is nearly two thirds of a mile. Its excavation, owing to the clayey nature of the soil, was attended with an enormous expenditure of money, and occupied a period of three years.

This tunnel is followed by a succession of beautiful bridges, the most elegant of which is one of three arches, which carries the Edgware-road across the line. Beyond this bridge is the pretty village of Kilburn, which is interesting as standing upon the ancient Roman Watling-street. As the traveller darts across this ancient Way, his mind will naturally



turn back to the time when the victorious eagles of Rome were seen proudly flying where Stephenson's "Wildfires" now majestically sweep; and perhaps he may be disposed to draw a parallel between Roman ways and British railways, both of which form the grandest works of their respective nations, and both of which are carried in direct lines with very little respect either for natural or conventional obstacles. Were the comparison of the respective grandeur of these noble undertakings fully carried out, we think the palm must eventually be given to the moderns; for the ancients, not needing perfect levels, could pass over mountains through which we have to cut our passage; and they having to consult the convenience of men and horses merely, found that blocks of solid granite would answer their every purpose; whereas we, having to humour the caprices of locomotive engines and flying trains, must pave our roads with bars of cast iron.

The open country, which now appears on either hand, is as beautiful as the glimpse we obtain of it is transitory. On the left are the Bell Inn tea gardens, which, on every fine day, present an animated scene; being then thronged with numerous gay parties, who have flocked thither from all parts of the metropolis, to breathe the pure air, enjoy the delightful prospect, and watch the passing trains. On the right, Hampstead, with all its natural and artificial beauties, its handsome houses, its gardens and shrubberies, is seen to great advantage. This respectable village, in the early part of last century, became a fashionable watering place, in consequence of the discovery of a chalybeate spring; and many were the concerts, *ridottos*,

assemblies, and other amusements, which the Upper and Lower Flasks, Belsize House, and the Spaniards, afforded the visiter; but either through the spring losing its properties, or the place its *haut ton*, it has now ceased to be frequented, and valitudinarians of quality go elsewhere, to sacrifice at the shrine of Esculapius by day, and mingle in the circles of Terpsichore by night.

We have scarcely enjoyed this view three parts of a minute before we are again enclosed between the lofty banks of a deep cutting, along which we run for a few seconds, and then plunge into the dismal obscurity of another tunnel. This subterraneous passage, however, does not long exclude us from the light of day, its length being only 360 yards. Kensal Green, from which it takes its name, is a small and insignificant hamlet. Its cemetery, from which alone it derives any note, approaches close to the line, and almost stretches over the tunnel.

As the beauties of nature have hitherto been almost totally veiled from us, by a succession of tunnels and excavations, we hail with pleasure the delightful prospect which now begins to open upon our view. Instead of hiding ourselves underground, as if afraid to be seen, we now rise from our concealment, and sweep along a level tract; or, mounting aloft as in the chariot of Phaeton, look down from our aërial flight upon an almost boundless extent of varied landscape. It is now that we begin to feel the exhilarating effect of railway travelling. Whilst rushing through cuttings, between walls, and under bridges, the proximity of every object causes the velocity of

the motion to be fully apparent, and the mind is wound up into a state of excitement which, though at first not altogether disagreeable, is not of a permanently pleasant character; but, when sailing through the open country, where the eye can range unconfined, the rapidity of the motion seems softened into an easy and graceful swiftness, and the only sensations experienced are those of delight and enjoyment. The eloquent speculator on the origin of our ideas of the sublime and beautiful, would probably be inclined to class our feelings in the one case under the head of the sublime, in the other under that of the beautiful.

The scenery between Kensall Green and Harrow is extremely pleasant; and the variety afforded by the undulating nature of the ground adds to its interest. Sometimes we are gliding along on the level of the surrounding country, and admiring the more adjacent beauties of the landscape; then we are rising on an embankment or sweeping over a viaduct, and throwing our eye with freedom and delight over a wide extended prospect; till rushing between the sides of a cutting, the scenery for a moment totally disappears, but only to burst upon us again with its charms enhanced by their momentary eclipse. For the first mile or two the prospect is contracted, but prettily diversified with trees. It begins to expand after we have passed the station house of the Birmingham, Bristol, and Thames Junction Railway, and its loveliness gradually increases. On our right appears some of the finest scenery in Middlesex; on our left is the rich foliage of Twyford Abbey; and before us stretches the wide vale of the Brent. The river gracefully

meanders through the valley; Harrow Hill rises gradually beyond; and above the trees which surround its summit, Harrow church lifts its lofty spire.

The little river Brent, which we cross by a handsome viaduct, rises near Chipping Barnet, and flows into the Thames at Brentford, opposite the Kew Gardens. The wide valley through which it flows has been the scene of several sanguinary combats. In 1016, Edmund Ironside, having compelled the Danes to raise the siege of London, pursued them to this valley, and routed them with great slaughter; and in the civil wars, the contending parties here fought a battle, in which the Royalists were victorious.

Rising out of the valley of the Brent, we pass Apperton and Sudbury on our left, and the handsome villa and richly wooded park of Wimbley on our right, and rapidly approach Harrow Weald and Stanmore Heath. The town of Harrow soon forms an interesting object on the left; whilst in the contrary direction may be distinguished Preston Hall, the seat of Miss Philpots, and a tumulus or mound called Bell Mound or Belmont, near which is a monument in honour of Cassibelaunus, the king of the Tribonantes, who led the combined British forces against Cæsar's invading armies. Embosomed in the distant woods lies Bentley Priory, the splendid seat of the Marquis of Abercorn; and beyond it, near Stanmore, is the place where formerly stood the magnificent palace of Canons, built by the first Duke of Chandos, at an expense of £250,000.

After passing under Harrow Bridge we soon



become sensible of a diminution of speed; and in a very few moments come to a stoppage for the first time since leaving Camden Town.

### Harrow Station.

Distance to London,  $11\frac{3}{4}$ —Birmingham, 101 miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

\*\*\* Those printed in small capitals are market towns.

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>					<i>Places E. of Station.</i>				
Pinner	..	..	..	2 miles.	Stanmore	..	..	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	miles.
Ruislip	..	..	..	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ —	Edgware	..	..	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	—
UXBRIDGE	..	..	..	8 $\frac{1}{4}$ —	Elstree	..	..	5	—

HARROW-ON-THE-HILL, the conspicuous church of which has for many miles formed so interesting an object in the landscape, lies about a mile to the south of the station. It is chiefly distinguished on account of its Free Grammar School, founded in 1571, in the reign of Elizabeth, and which ranks among the most celebrated classical schools in England. The founder, John Lyon, a native of the neighbouring hamlet of Preston, amongst other regulations, directed that the pupils should be instructed in archery; and it was customary, till about the middle of the last century, for the scholars, at an annual festival holden on the 4th of August, to shoot at a mark for a silver arrow. The town has no staple manufacture, its trade depending almost exclusively upon the school, and numerous visitors from the metropolis. The population is 3,862. The learned Dr. Samuel Parr was born here in 1747; and in the nave of the church is the tomb of Sir Samuel Garth, a celebrated poet and physician. The church is a spacious structure, with a tower and lofty

spire at the west end; and was founded by Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of William the Conqueror.

On account of the delightful prospect which the churchyard affords, it is a place of frequent resort. There, on the serene evenings of summer, leaning on the moss-covered tombstone, may be seen the ardent lover of nature gazing with rapture on her peerless beauties. The wide rich valley through which the Thames rolls its mighty waters stretches before him in all its incomparable loveliness; the high grounds and richly wooded scenery in the neighbourhood of Stanmore bound the view towards the north; and on the south and south-west the eye ranges with delight over a charming variety of landscape in Middlesex and Berkshire. But there is also thrown over the whole scene a deep and overpowering interest by the lofty turrets of the royal castle of Windsor rising in the distance, and the mighty metropolis reposing in stillness with all its busy myriads and swelling bosoms. Other scenes may vie with this in loveliness, but certainly none can be viewed with deeper interest.

Upon leaving Harrow station Little Stanmore appears on the right. It is a small village, containing 876 inhabitants. The church is an elegant little structure, partly erected by the munificent Duke of Chandos, who bestowed some very costly decorations on the interior. For its consecration Handel composed the sacred drama of *Esther*; and within its walls is a vault constructed by the Duke of Chandos for the members of the Handel family. Great Stanmore is two miles distant, and stands in a very

elevated position, and in a neighbourhood abounding with handsome seats and villas. It is celebrated as being the place at which, on the conclusion of the late war, Louis XIV. had his first interview with the Prince Regent, the Emperor of Russia, and the King of Prussia. The respectable village of Edgeware, containing 591 inhabitants, lies at a distance of half a mile from Little Stanmore; and from its favourable position with regard to the metropolis, is become the residence of numerous opulent and respectable families. It stands on the line of the Roman Watling-street: as does also the neighbouring village of Elstree, which is said to have been first erected out of the ruins of the ancient city of Sulloniacim, of which there are still some vestiges about one mile southward.

After passing through a short cutting the little village of Hatchend, which closely adjoins the railway on the right, appears pleasantly situated on the gentle slope of a hill. The bridge, beneath which we are here carried, connects Hatchend with the village of Pinner, which, with the trees scattered around it, and the rich foliage of Pinner Park, forms a landscape of very considerable beauty. Beyond Pinner, but not visible from the line, is the village of Ruislip; and three miles and a half further south the town of Uxbridge.

By looking back the last glimpse may now be obtained of Harrow-on-the-Hill. On the left appears Oxhey Ridge. This ridge is part of a chain of hills which extend from Chipping Barnet to Uxbridge, and for a considerable distance form the boundary between Middlesex and Hertfordshire. The materials

of which they are composed are principally sand and clay; and it was on account of the difficulty of carrying a tunnel through such a description of ground, that the railway was made to cross them by a cutting, notwithstanding their great elevation. In passing through this excavation, we cannot avoid being struck with astonishment at the immense amount of labour which its construction must have required; it being a mile and a half in length, and in many places between thirty and forty feet deep. It is crossed by several bridges, the principal of which is Oxhey-lane bridge,—a noble structure of three arches, but attracting attention chiefly by its extraordinary height. A short opening which occurs immediately after passing this bridge enables us to catch a glimpse of Oxhey Wood; and, upon the termination of the cutting, we behold amid some prettily wooded scenery on the left, the little village of Oxhey, with its antiquated chapel and remarkable churchyard,—remarkable, indeed, if we may place any credit in the asseverations of a rustic, who solemnly assured us that its silent denizens were wont to be buried in a bolt upright posture.

We have now entered the county of Hertfordshire; and as our elevated position affords us a very extensive prospect, we have an opportunity of forming a tolerable estimate of its general appearance. Its beauties are principally of the gentler sort, and are greatly enhanced by the villas and ornamented grounds which abound in every direction. The well-watered valley of the Colne stretching before us forms a pleasing and extensive landscape; and delightfully situated

at the western extremity of the valley, may be distinguished the market town of Rickmansworth. We may observe, respecting Rickmansworth, that the manor originally formed part of the demesne of the Saxon kings, and was bestowed by Offa, of Mercia, upon the abbot and monks of St. Albans; and that it subsequently passed through the hands of Ridley, the martyr, and the notorious Archbishop Bonner. After crossing Watford Heath, we proceed along Watford embankment, and obtain a very interesting prospect, in which the town of Watford in the hollow, and the church of Watford on the hill, form conspicuous objects. Moor Hall, the residence of Lord Grosvenor, may likewise be distinctly perceived among the distant trees on the left. This splendid mansion has been the abode of an unusually large number of illustrious personages; it has been successively occupied by Archbishop Neville, Cardinal Wolsey, the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, son of Charles the Second, and by Lord Anson, the circumnavigator.

We now come to the celebrated viaduct over the Colne; but if the traveller has been anticipating the pleasure of beholding it, he will suffer a severe disappointment; it being totally hidden from the view of those who rapidly thunder across its lofty arches. In this respect, the humble pedestrian has the advantage; and we can scarcely avoid feeling some touches of envy when we look down into the valley, and behold him wandering through the verdant meadows, and gazing with admiration on the noble structure which stretches across the stream, and is reflected in the bosom of its limpid waters. A lovelier and more enchanting



scene can scarcely be imagined than is presented by this viaduct, when the sinking sun is diffusing over the face of nature his richer and more mellowing tints. Nature always appears most lovely just before she assumes her sable mantle; but here, art reposes so sweetly in the bosom of nature, that the departing sun seems compelled to throw on them his brightest, sweetest smile, ere he draws over them the curtain of night, and leaves them in each other's embrace. The entire length of the viaduct, which consists of five arches of thirty feet span, is 300 feet; and its height is no less than fifty feet above the stream. The view of the river winding through the meadows on the right is extremely beautiful, and may in some measure compensate us for the loss of a peep at the viaduct itself.

The Watford embankment, which is continued a short distance after crossing the Colne, is a work of immense labour. It is the longest embankment on the line, being a mile and a half in length, and is in many places carried over unstable and marshy ground. The material employed in its formation is chalk, which substance forms the substratum of the whole of the county. At the termination of the embankment is

### WATFORD STATION.

Distance to London,  $17\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $94\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

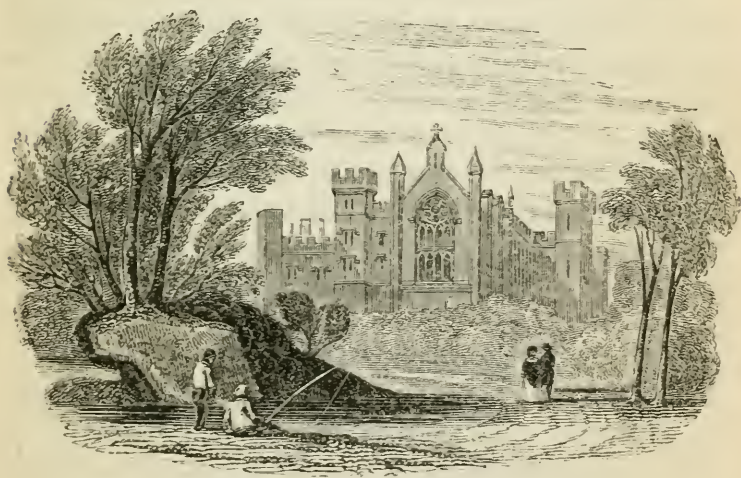
DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>				<i>Places E. of Station.</i>			
WATFORD	..	..	$\frac{3}{4}$ mile.	ST. ALBANS	..	..	6 miles.
RICKMANSWORTH	..	..	4 miles.	Abbot's Langley	..	..	$3\frac{1}{4}$ —
King's Langley	..	..	$4\frac{3}{4}$ —	Hunton Bridge	..	..	$3\frac{1}{4}$ —
BEACONSFIELD	..	..	13 —				

The accommodations at this station, which is the first principal one on the line, are much superior to

those at Harrow; and the arrangements with respect to entering and leaving the carriages, are very similar to those which are observed at Euston Grove.

The town of Watford is three quarters of a mile from the station, and is situate on the banks of the Colne. It derives its name from its vicinity to Watling-street, and to a ford over the river, to which its origin is attributed. It consists of one principal street, about a mile in length, which is built in a very irregular manner. Its population is 2,960, which is chiefly employed in the manufacture of straw plat, and in the throwsting of silk. The town is bounded on the north by Cashiobury Park, the grounds of which are exten-



CASHIOBURY ABBEY.

sive, tastefully laid out, and highly ornamented. The river Gade and the Grand Junction Canal both pass through them, and it was originally intended that the

railway' should do so likewise; but the noble proprietor, happening to differ from the directors as to the picturesque effect of a railway upon a prospect, opposed them in the House of Lords, and by his influence there compelled them to abandon their design.

The hamlet of Cashiobury lies a mile and a half north-west from Watford, and derives its name from its having been, in the time of the early Britons, the seat of Cassibelaunus, king of the Cassii. It was afterwards the residence of the Saxon kings of Mercia, and was included by Offa in the possessions which he gave to the monastery of St. Albans.

Seven miles north of the station is St. Albans, with the eventful history and numerous antiquities of which we might fill many pages; but as our engine is now beginning to move, we must content ourselves with remarking, that this venerable city was the metropolis of ancient Britain; that it was the scene of the celebrated assault upon the Romans by Boadicea, in which 70,000 Britons fell; and that in its Abbey Church the tomb of king Offa,\* its founder, is still to be seen.

\* This prince, whom we have so frequently had occasion to mention, ascended the throne of Mercia, one of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, in 755, and was contemporary with Charlemagne. He reigned thirty-nine years, and distinguished himself equally by his crimes and his acts of piety. He treacherously murdered Ethelbert, a neighbouring monarch, and then, to appease the remorse of his conscience, gave the tenth of his goods to the church, performed a pilgrimage to Rome, and levied the celebrated Peter's Pence, which the Roman Pontiff afterwards claimed as a tribute. —HUME'S *Hist. of England*.



## CHAPTER III.

## WATFORD TO TRING.

Fourteen miles.

AND now, having received a fresh supply of water, we are again “yoked with whirlwinds and the raging blast,” and sweep the long tract of a narrow ravine, which appears as if cut in rivalry of those which nature in her playful mood has formed among the mountains of Wales and the highlands of Scotland. One would suppose that precipitous banks, sixty feet in height, would be almost sufficient of themselves to exclude the light of day ; but after we have passed between them for upwards of a mile, we are again plunged into one of those gloomy burrows which afford so sensible an illustration of what is implied in “darkness that may be felt.” The necessity for the construction of this tunnel arose from the unwillingness of the Earls of Essex and Clarendon to allow the railway to pass through their parks ; and accordingly it is usual for the second class passengers, as the damp and smothering wind drives against their unprotected faces, highly to extol the refined taste of these noble peers, and that nice perception of the picturesque to which they are indebted for their delightful subterraneous airing. The length of this tunnel is one mile and eighty yards,

and the number of ventilating shafts is five. Upon issuing from the tunnel, the traveller will scarcely avoid noticing the very mean appearance of the northern entrance compared with that at the southern extremity. Indeed, it is observable of all the tunnels and bridges on the line, that they invariably present their most handsome front to those who are leaving the metropolis. When first we remarked this singular circumstance, we were reminded of Dr. Johnson's picture of a Scotchman, whom he always represented as having his face turned to the south; and of whom he was accustomed to say, that although he had some truly wild and romantic scenery in his native highlands, yet the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever beheld was the high road which led him to England. The excavation continues for a short distance after emerging from the tunnel; and the Hazlewood road is carried across the railway by a bridge which is more than fifty feet above the level of the line. Upon the prospect opening on the left, we behold among the trees the village of Langley Bury. In the rear may be perceived Grove Park, the richly wooded seat of the Earl of Clarendon; and beautifully situated on the distant rising ground is the ancient village of King's Langley. This interesting place derives its regal appellation from its having been the occasional residence of some of the kings of England. Henry III. built himself a palace here, and in it was born Edmund de Langley, the fifth son of Edward III., and Duke of York. In the parish church lie the ashes of the same Duke of York; as did also the remains of that unfortunate prince, king

Richard II., for some time after his tragical death at Pomfret. To the lovers of the marvellous it may be interesting to know, that a few years ago this village and neighbourhood were thrown into consternation by the discovery of a gigantic human skeleton; to account for the existence of which, however it might puzzle the *savans* of the British Association, would doubtless be a matter of very little difficulty to the ancient Elspeths of such a place as King's Langley.

We now enter upon an embankment; and in crossing Hunton Viaduct obtain an interesting view of the village of Hunton Bridge, reposing in the hollow of a sylvan amphitheatre. About half a mile beyond this village may be seen Bury Langley House, the seat of Francis Whittingstall, Esq., and on the right of the line a neat edifice called Rose Hill House.

The sight of the Grand Junction Canal, which here runs close to the line, naturally causes our mind to turn upon the comparative merits of railways and canals, and the immense superiority of the former; and whilst sweeping across the lofty viaduct, we can scarcely avoid a smile of contempt as we look down upon our pitiful rival,—

“Which like a wounded snake drags its slow length along.”

What would Brindley, the celebrated canal engineer, who, when asked why Providence had created rivers, replied, he supposed it must have been to feed canals—what would he say, were he to behold one of Stephenson's engines flying with the speed of a racehorse, with a load heavier than was ever placed in the hugest canal

boat? He would, one would think, have changed his mind as to rivers being created to feed canals, and have made the design of their creation to be that of supplying water for locomotives. The reign of canals has been short; it being only eighty years since the first English Canal Act was passed. Should the triumph of railways be as short lived, and should travelling by steam be superseded in another eighty years, by some other invention as far surpassing it as it does the old methods of transportation, metaphysicians may begin to tremble for the tenability of their hitherto undisputed axiom, that a person cannot be in two places at one and the same time. The Grand Junction Canal will now remain in sight for a considerable distance; and, forming a prominent feature in almost every landscape, will prove an agreeable and interesting companion.

We now pass Gallows Hill on the right, and after crossing the viaduct which bears its name, obtain a view of Abbot's Langley. This village is also on the right; and, from the summit of the eminence upon which it stands, the square tower and short spire of its ancient church rise conspicuously. The parish of Abbot's Langley has had the honour of giving birth to the only Englishman that was ever raised to the papal crown, namely, Adrian IV. A little further onwards is Home Park Paper Mill, the property of Messrs. Longman and Dickenson, who have several other extensive establishments in the immediate neighbourhood. The pretty little village which is seen across the meadows on our left, and which continues for some time to form an interesting

object in the beautiful landscape which lies in that direction, is King's Langley, of which we have already given some account. After crossing the King's Langley Viaduct, we presently come to a bridge over the Grand Junction Canal, from which the prospect is extensive and beautiful. On the left, we behold Rickmansworth and Moor Park in the distance, and Primrose Green and King's Langley in the foreground. On the right, and near to the line, are Nash Mills; a little beyond them a picturesque dingle, called Boggy Bottom, and in the distance Gorhambury Park, the seat of Earl Verulam. Mr. Dickenson's handsome new house, standing on an eminence, and the antiquated cottages of his workmen interspersed amongst the trees, and almost covered by the foliage, give considerable interest to the scenery, until it is hidden from our view by the banks of a slight excavation. Upon emerging from this cutting, the same interesting objects again appear in sight; and with the village of Two Waters, of piscatory celebrity, and Corner Hall, surrounded with rich foliage, form an unusually pleasing landscape. The cutting which we now enter is nearly two miles long, and in some parts forty-five feet in depth. It is crossed by two bridges; the first of which supports the road leading from the town of Hemel Hempstead to a village called Bovingdon, which lies three miles west of the line, and contains a population of 962. Upon gaining once more the open country, we immediately arrive at the Boxmoor station.



**Boxmoor Station.**

Distance to London,  $24\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $87\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Place W. of Station.</i>					<i>Places E. of Station.</i>				
Bovington .. .. .	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	miles.		Hemel Hempstead .. ..	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	mile.	
					Redbourne .. .. .	5	$\frac{1}{4}$	miles.	

THE moor, from which this station derives its name, is situated at some little distance from it; and the surrounding scenery is very different from what we should expect to find at a place bearing the appellation of *Boxmoor*. No wild and barren heath stretches around: a lovely and fertile valley smiles before us. As we leave the station, and proceed along the embankment, the charms of the scenery grow and increase. On the left, Rowdon Common, with the richly wooded hills which rise beyond it, and the Boxmoor cottages, almost buried in beautiful foliage, presents a highly picturesque appearance. Yet this view can scarcely be said to excel that on the right, in which are comprised the interesting village of Two Waters; a considerable extent of country, interspersed with the pretty cottages of the paper makers; and the church of Hemel Hempstead, which lifts its lofty spire among the distant hills.

The town of Hemel Hempstead is one mile and a half east of Boxmoor station, and twenty-three miles from London. Its name is derived from two Saxon words, *hean* and *hampstede*, and signifies a dwelling in a high place. There is no mention of it previous to the Heptarchy; but it was included by Offa in the possessions which he gave to the abbey of St. Albans.



A charter of incorporation was granted to its inhabitants by Henry VIII. ; a copy of which, as renewed by Cromwell, is still preserved. The town is pleasantly situated on the declivity of a hill, and consists principally of one street, which is nearly a mile in length. Although its streets do not form those regular mathematical figures which we frequently find in the mushroom towns of a single generation, yet it has upon the whole a very neat and respectable appearance. The principal article of manufacture is straw plat; and the number of its inhabitants is 4,759. The church, which forms so pleasing an object from the railway, is a spacious cruciform structure, with an embattled tower, and lofty spire. At the west end is a finely painted window, presented by the eminent Sir Astley P. Cooper, whose seat is not far from the town.

Crossing the Box-lane Viaduct we run for a considerable distance by the side of the Grand Junction Canal, the smooth silvery surface of which forms another lovely feature in the picturesque scenery of this beautiful valley. We cross the canal by a handsome iron bridge, and continue to proceed along an embankment, the elevation of which is very favourable for the prospect. The hamlets of Felden and Longcroft appear pleasantly situated on the left; and Counters End, Hill End, and Pouching End, are successively passed on the right. The pretty village of Bourne End soon afterwards forms an interesting object on the left; and after passing it, the embankment along which we have proceeded for more than a mile terminates, after having frequently

reached a height of from twenty-five to thirty feet. A slight cutting now hides from our sight the landscape which has charmed us so much; but it will quickly make amends by introducing us to one still more picturesque. After passing under Haxter End bridge, the right hand bank of the cutting terminates; but the country is not visible in the other direction until we arrive at Bank Mill bridge, when the bank on the left hand also terminates, and a landscape of surpassing beauty bursts upon our view. The rural cottages of Bank Mill, the unruffled waters of the canal, and the rippling stream of the Gade, are in themselves “beautiful exceedingly;” but they appear still more so when contrasted with the dark rich foliage which envelopes the distant hills. After we have caught a glimpse of the tower of Berkhamstead church, the town itself, and the ruins of its ancient castle, we rapidly dart through a cutting, sweep along an embankment, and arrive at Berkhamstead station.

### **Berkhamstead Station.**

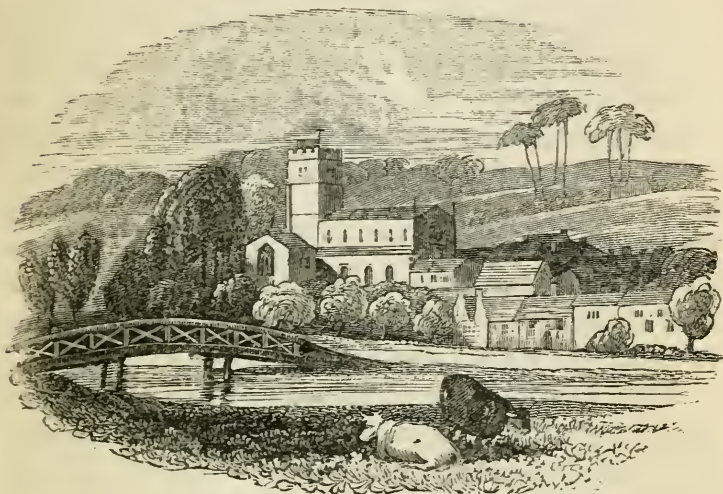
Distance to London,  $27\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $84\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>				<i>Place E. of Station.</i>			
CHESHAM..	..	..	..	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles.	Nettleden ..	..	..
AMERSHAM ..	..	..	..	7 $\frac{3}{4}$ —	..	..	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
HIGH WYCOMBE ..	..	..	..	14 $\frac{3}{4}$ —			

THE elevated position of this station, affords a delightful prospect of the lovely valley in the bosom of which

the town of Berkhamstead reposes. The intrinsic beauties of this romantic vale are in themselves



GREAT BERKHAMPSTEAD.

calculated to excite our warmest admiration ; but the interest with which we survey it is heightened tenfold by the remembrance, that in its groves and meadows the amiable Cowper first imbibed that ardent love of nature, which breathes throughout his incomparable poems. This was the scene of his childhood. Here, where the rushing trains now drown every softer sound, Cowper was wont to listen undisturbed to the sweet warblings of the songsters of the grove, as he wandered pensive and alone by the rippling waters of the Bulbrooke. What would have been his feelings had he beheld his lovely valley divided by an artificial embankment, and sullied with the smoke of steam engines ! We can imagine a tear bedimming his eye,

as he beheld the beauties of nature thus marred by the hand of man. But too true a lover of his country was he, to allow the feelings of the poet to predominate over those of the patriot. As a poet, he might lament the disfiguring of nature ; but as a patriot, he would exult in what constituted the glory of his country ; and instead of launching a minstrel's curse on the rude invader of the lovely scenes of his childhood, he would weave a poetic wreath for the brow of those who were encircling the head of Britannia with a halo of glory scarcely less bright than was gathered around it by those who fought her battles on the burning sands of Egypt, and the sultry plains of Hindoostan.

As we have been led to associate poetry with steam, we will take this opportunity of expressing our surprise that poetry has not yet presented her tribute to an agent so powerful and grand. The sons of Apollo have sung sublimely of those who have wielded the thunderbolts of destruction, and shattered the foundations of society ; and shall no lofty lyre be strung in honour of those who have drawn its bonds of union closer, and fixed its foundations deeper and firmer ? It is a grand sight to behold a master spirit rising from amid the chaos of anarchy, gathering the scattered elements of revolutionary fire and fury, and forging them into one mighty thunderbolt for his own grasp ; but is it not as noble a sight to behold a fellow mortal gathering together the elements of nature, and moulding them into an engine of terrible might, enduing it with the power of self-motion, clothing it with thunder, winging it with lightning, and flinging it from his hand as a specimen of his power ? On such a subject the bard

would have no ground to complain of a want of sublime imagery; and he would have the advantage of wandering in fields hitherto untrodden by the muses' feet, and visiting streams as yet untouched and virgin. Seeing, then, there is so ready a path by which the wanderer on Parnassus may reach its loftier cliffs, may we not expect that the next immortal poem which shall issue from the British press, will begin with—

I sing the Railway, I who lately sung,—

—we will not say, “Thalaba,” “The Pelican Isle,” or, the “Corn Law Rhymes,” through fear of discouraging those whose brows have never yet been shaded by an olive wreath.

The town of Berkhamstead, in which the author of “The Task” was born, is beautifully situated in the bottom of a deep valley on the left of the line. It stands on the banks of the Bulbrooke, and is a place of considerable antiquity. It was called by the Romans *Durobrivæ*. Its Saxon name was *Berghamstede*, signifying a town standing on a hill; but as this appears a rather unaccountable appellation for a town lying in the bottom of a valley, we must suppose *Berghamstede* to be a corruption of *Burghamstede*, which signifies a town beside a fortress, and then we shall have an explanation of its name perfectly consistent with its actual position. The kings of Mercia had a castle here; and here, at the time of the Conquest, William received the submission of Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury. A castle was built by Robert, Earl of Moreton, to whom the Conqueror gave the town; but it was subsequently razed to the ground by Henry I., on



account of the rebellion of Moreton's son. The castle was rebuilt in the reign of John, and soon afterwards besieged by the Dauphin of France, who had come over to assist the barons in their contest with the king. James I. having selected Berkhamstead as a nursery for his children, granted the inhabitants a charter of incorporation; but they were so impoverished during the civil wars, that they were unable to maintain their privileges, and the charter became forfeited. There are still, on the north side of the town, slight vestiges of the palace of the Mercian kings; and at the north-east end of Castle-street are the remains of the castle, consisting of elliptical walls, double and triple moats, and two wide piers, between which was probably the drawbridge. The church is a spacious cruciform structure, ornamented with a richly sculptured tower. The population is 2,369, the greater part of which are employed in the manufacture of straw plat. The prænomen "Great" is affixed to this town to distinguish it from Little Berkhamstead, which is a small village in the neighbourhood of Hertford, and twenty miles distant from its superior namesake.

After leaving this station, we see the houses of the town extending by the side of the line for a considerable distance, whilst White Hill is the most interesting object in the contrary direction. After crossing the Berkhamstead viaduct we obtain a distant view of Wigginton; and, accompanied by our interesting companion, the Grand Junction Canal, pass Lady Grimstone's grounds, which lie on the right. Here the embankment terminates; and, after passing under



an accommodation bridge, we enter a cutting, which quickly brings us to Northchurch tunnel. As this tunnel is only a quarter of a mile long, and is made through a stratum of chalk, we pass through it with less trepidation than we did its predecessors; nevertheless we are not at all displeased when the light of day again bursts through the windows of our carriage, and we find ourselves once more on an embankment, with a charming prospect before us. Ashbridge Park, the seat of the Countess of Bridgwater, lies on the right; and on the left the village of Northchurch, with its pretty towered church. This village, which is also called Berkhamstead, is a mile and a quarter from Great Berkhamstead, and contains 1,156 inhabitants. It is situated in a valley, and is composed principally of mean cottages. On the top of the western hill are the small but interesting ruins of Marlin chapel, which is supposed to have been demolished by Oliver Cromwell. As we proceed onwards, with Northchurch Common on our right, we pass Dudswell bridge, and the hamlet from which it takes its name. Here the embankment terminates, and the line is crossed by Holybush bridge. Berkhamstead Common lies on the right; but is very soon excluded from our view by a deep excavation. Upon emerging from this cutting, which is rather more than a mile in length, a beautiful prospect is unfolded on each side; but, after passing Wigginton Bridge, the rich foliage of Ashbridge Park, which is now not very distant from the line, together with Oldbury Wood, and the Chiltern Hills, form a landscape of still greater beauty. The simple monument erected by Lady Bridgwater, in

memory of the late duke, may be distinguished amongst the distant trees in the park. At the foot of the Chiltern Hills, the summits of which are crowned with thick plantations, is pleasantly situated the village of Aldbury. On our left is Pendley Park, and also the village of Wigginton, near which is an extensive common, that has been the scene of many a well-fought battle, even as early as the days of Roman supremacy. Tring Park next appears on the same side of the line; it is beautifully situated among hills which are clothed with fine beech, and contains a splendid mansion, which was originally built by Charles II., for his favourite mistress, Eleanor Gwynn, but which has since been decorated in a more modern style. After passing under an elegant three-arch bridge, connecting two portions of Lady Bridgwater's domains, we speedily arrive at Tring station.

### TRING STATION.

Distance to London,  $31\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $80\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>					<i>Place E. of Station.</i>				
TRING	..	..	..	..	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles.	IVINGHOE	..	..	..
Mentmore	..	..	..	..	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ —				3 miles.
WENDOVER	..	..	..	..	7 $\frac{1}{4}$ —				
AYLESBURY	..	..	..	..	9 $\frac{1}{4}$ —				
PRINCE'S RISBOROUGH					12 $\frac{1}{2}$ —				

At this station the railway reaches its greatest elevation, being 420 feet above the level of the sea, and 300 above that of Camden Town depôt. This elevation is attained by a series of gradients never exceeding 1 in 330, a section of which the reader will find on the engraved map at the commencement of this volume. The town of Tring lies two miles west of the railway,

and contains a population of 3,488. It is a place of remote antiquity, and is supposed to have derived its name from its shape having originally been triangular. In Alfred's time, it was called *Treung*, and was considered of sufficient importance to give its name to the hundred in which it was situated. The Roman Ick-nield Way, leading from Dorchester to Colchester, passed in its vicinity. It consists of two principal streets, of which the longer is crossed at its upper extremity by the shorter. Its appearance is neat, and its atmosphere very salubrious. The church is a handsome embattled structure, in the ancient English style, with a large tower at the west end, surmounted with a low spire.

Four miles beyond Tring, at the foot of the Chiltern Hills, and near the entrance of the vale of Aylesbury, stands the market town of Wendover. This place contains a population of 2,008 inhabitants. It returned members to parliament, from the twenty-eighth year of the reign of Edward I., to the second of Edward II., when the right ceased. It was restored, however, by the parliament of James I., notwithstanding that monarch's declaration "that he was troubled with too many burgesses already." During the five parliaments preceding the protectorate, Wendover "troubled" one of James's successors with one who durst venture to call a king to account for daring to trample upon the laws of the realm,—the courageous Hampden. However, the appearance of its name in the unlucky schedule A of the Reform Act has finally disfranchised its 130 potwallopers.

## CHAPTER IV.

## TRING TO WOLVERTON.

Twenty-one miles.

IMMEDIATELY after leaving the Tring station, we enter a deep cutting through the Chiltern Hills. These hills are part of a great chain of chalk hills, extending from Norfolk south-westward into Dorsetshire. They here form the northern boundary of the basin of the Colne, and separate it from that part of Buckinghamshire which is designated the Vale. The almost impervious nature of the woods with which these hills were anciently covered, rendered it necessary for the king to appoint an officer to keep them clear of banditti, and thus was originated the stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds,—an office which still exists, though its duties have long since ceased. They are still plentifully wooded, chiefly with trees belonging to the beech family. In passing through these hills, the traveller cannot avoid being powerfully struck with the whiteness of the sides of the cutting, which will form a striking contrast to the sombre hue of the cuttings through the Staffordshire coal district. Two walls of chalk, sixty feet in height, and running two miles in a straight line, cannot but present a very singular appearance; whilst three bridges spanning the deep chasm serve to remind the traveller of nothing more forcibly than the

perilous adventures of the Orkney bird catchers. Upon making our exit from this cutting, a great extent of country becomes visible on both sides of the line, and the villages of Pitstone and Great Seabrook appear in sight. After admiring the pretty tower and steeple of Pitstone church, and the variegated range of the Clipperdown and Wards Combe Hills, we may cast our eye across Pitstone Green, and behold, in an elevated situation, on the side of a chalk hill, the town of Ivinghoe. The manor of Ivinghoe formerly belonged, according to tradition, to the Hampden family; and the ancient couplet,—

“Tring, Wing, and Ivinghoe did go,  
For striking the Black Prince a blow,”—

Would seem to intimate that it was Hampden of Hampden's choleric disposition that occasioned the loss of his manorial possessions. The population at present is 1,665; and the only manufacture is that of straw plat. On the left the tower of Marsworth church appears among the hilly fields; and shortly afterwards the rich vale of Aylesbury opens on our view, and the eye ranges delighted over a wide extent of beautiful fields and meadows. The natural fertility of this vale has been highly extolled, and is almost unrivalled. It lies between the Chiltern Hills and a parallel range of hills of calcareous stone, running at a distance of only a few miles along the western side of Buckinghamshire. Rich clays and loams compose its soil, and the greater part of the land is occupied by grazing and dairy farms.

Proceeding along the side of the canal, we have on



our left Cheddington Hill, which, for a short time, hides the village of Cheddington from our view. On the right, the villages of Eddlesborough, Northall, and Ivinghoe Aston, lying at the foot of the chalk hills, form, with Crawley Wood and Clapperdown in the distance, an interesting landscape. Cheddington church now appears on the left; and in the opposite direction the most favourable view may be obtained of the town and church of Ivinghoe. The next bridge beneath which we pass is Cheddington bridge; and here, at a distance of thirty-six miles from London, the Aylesbury Railway joins the London and Birmingham line. The town of Aylesbury, for the accommodation of which this branch has been formed, lies nine miles west of the line. It derives its importance chiefly from its being the mart for the produce of the rich vale in which it is situate. In the reign of the Conqueror it was a royal manor, and some parcels of it were granted by that monarch upon the extraordinary tenure of providing straw for his bed, sweet herbs for his chamber, and two green geese and three eels for his table, whenever he should visit Aylesbury. The houses are principally of brick, and several handsome residences have lately been erected at the entrances from London and Buckingham. Aylesbury can boast of a Florist's and Horticultural Society, which has always been liberally supported; and of giving the titles of Earl and Marquis to the ancient family of Bruce. The church is an interesting structure, in the decorated style of English architecture. The population of the town is 4,907; and its only manufacture is that of bone lace.



The embankment by which we are crossing Aylesbury vale is here upwards of twenty-five feet in height, and affords an extensive prospect in every direction. The interesting chalk hills still bound the easterly view, and the fertile valley extends to the west. On the right, the village of Mentmore may be distinguished on the side of a gentle slope; and after crossing Horton viaduct, the villages of Horton and Slapton are on the right, and the first glimpse is caught of the elegant spire of Leighton Buzzard church. The prospect now embraces the lovely country beyond Leighton Buzzard, and the villages of Great and Little Bellington and Stanton; but the attention is quickly diverted from every other object by the appearance of Leighton Buzzard itself. After passing Ascot church on the left, the embankment along which we have been proceeding during the last six miles terminates; but a short cutting soon brings us to another, from which the prospect is beautiful and extensive. Pottisgrove and Battlesdon Park appear on the high ground above Leighton Buzzard; and on the left, are Ledbury Green, the village of Wing, which contains 1,152 inhabitants, and the little hamlet of Ascot, where the Empress Maud founded a Benedictine Priory, which, after the suppression of monasteries, came into the possession of Cardinal Wolsey. Another cutting and another embankment bring us to Leighton Buzzard station.

**Leighton Buzzard Station.**

Distance to London,  $40\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $71\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>					<i>Places E. of Station.</i>				
Wing .. .. .	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	miles.		DUNSTABLE .. .. .	8	miles.		
Stewkley .. .. .	4	$\frac{1}{2}$	—		Eddlesborough .. .. .	5	$\frac{1}{2}$	—	
AYLESBURY .. .. .	10	—			Stanbridge .. .. .	3	$\frac{3}{4}$	—	
Whitchurch .. .. .	8	—			Great Brickhill .. .. .	4	$\frac{1}{4}$	—	
Mentmore.. .. .	4	—							

THE town of Leighton Buzzard, which, with the fine massive tower and octagonal spire of its noble church,



LEIGHTON BUZZARD CHURCH.

has formed so interesting an object during the last few miles, lies a little to the north of the station, and is in

the county of Bedfordshire. It is supposed to be the same as the *Lygean-burgh* of the Saxon Chronicle, and its present name is said to be a corruption of *Leighton Beau Desert*. In the centre of the town there is an ancient and elegant cross, of pentangular form, and elaborate workmanship ; but concerning the origin and design of which, both history and tradition are silent. However, as it is reported to have existed more than 500 years, and as there was formerly a cell of Cistercian monks in the neighbourhood, it has most probably been in some way connected with that establishment. It was repaired in 1650, the expense being defrayed by a rate of fourpence, levied on each of the inhabitants. The chief articles of trade are timber, iron, lime, brick, and corn, and several females are employed in making lace and straw plat. The population is 3,330.

Seven miles from Leighton Buzzard is the town of Dunstable, so celebrated as the emporium of those unclassic coverings of the female face which have contributed more to produce the marble complexion of “the pale unripened beauties of the north,” than even the unkindness of Phœbus, whom the poets of softer climes roundly charge with this direful crime. It was formerly distinguished for the number of its inns, and was wont to derive considerable wealth from the numerous travellers in whose route it lay ; but it has now, in a great measure, suffered the fate of Babylon, when Cyrus had cut off the waters of the Euphrates,—the tide has been turned into a different channel. With regard to antiquity, Dunstable will yield to no town we have yet described. The ancient Britons

had a settlement here, called *Maes Gwyn*, or the "White Field," and with which the *Magiorinium* of Antoninus is thought to have been identical. The derivation of its present appellation has been a subject of controversy; some deriving it from *Dun*, a hill, and *staple*, a commercial mart; whilst others contend that the first syllable was the name of a famous freebooter, who spread terror through this neighbourhood in the reign of Henry I. The town was rebuilt by Henry after he had cleared the country of robbers; and by him, also, a royal residence was erected, and a priory of Black Canons was founded. In the chapel of our Lady at the Priory, Archbishop Cranmer pronounced the sentence of divorce between Henry VIII. and Catharine of Arragon. The church, which is now almost all that remains of the ancient Priory, was originally a magnificent and extensive cruciform structure; but after Henry VIII. had abandoned a design which he had had of converting it into a cathedral, a considerable part of it was demolished. The remains consist of the west front, the nave, and two aisles; and exhibit both the Norman and the early and later English styles of architecture. The town of Dunstable consists of four principal streets, which intersect each other at right angles, and correspond exactly with the four cardinal points. Its population is 2,117.

Upon leaving the Leighton Buzzard station, we traverse a larger extent of level country than we have yet met with; the inclination during the next fifteen miles being seldom more than 1 in 1,100. Yet natural obstacles have not been wanting. The first which presents itself is Jackdaw Hill, which is perforated by

a tunnel a quarter of a mile in length. The tunnel is succeeded by a short cutting, the perpendicular sides of which are sixty feet in height; and shortly afterwards we make the sharpest turn which occurs on any part of the line. Upon again reaching the open country, Linslade Wood is seen on both sides of the line, and Linslade Hall and Church quickly appear on the right. The village of Linslade has little to recommend it to our notice, unless it be that six centuries ago it was highly celebrated on account of a holy well to which our deluded forefathers were wont to make many a long and toilsome pilgrimage.

The next object to which we would direct the attention of the traveller, as we pass through some commonplace scenery, is the town of Great Brickhill, standing on one of the hills which lie to the right. In the same direction, but close to the line, is Stoke Hammond; whilst on the left are Stewkley, Soulbury, and Liscombe Park. Of these places the most important is Stewkley: it has a population of 1,053, and is deserving of notice on account of its church being one of the most enriched and complete specimens of the Norman style of architecture now existing. Near the town is a lime quarry, which would probably repay a visit from those who are fond of geological researches, as there have been found in it many curious antediluvian remains, and large fossil shells. Liscombe Park is the property of Lady Lovatt, and contains a fine mansion, standing on the brow of a gentle eminence, and commanding a beautiful view of the level country which is traversed by the railway.

As we proceed, the scenery improves considerably;



and after passing through a short cutting, and under one or two accommodation bridges, Great and Little Brickhill, with the simple spires of their respective churches, appear on the right, and form interesting objects in the landscape. The hills on the right are mantled with rich foliage, and the little village of Bow Brickhill can just be discerned peeping from amongst it. In the contrary direction there is little to attract attention, save the spire of Stewkley church, and a distant windmill, which marks the site of Drayton Parslow. As the line now preserves a rectilinear course for several miles, the traveller who is willing to venture his head out of the window of the carriage, at the risk of its assuming the appearance of that of the luckless rider of Edmonton, may have an uninterrupted prospect of the railway, with the cuttings through which it passes, almost as far as Denbigh Hall. We, however, would advise him to suspend his observations until he can make them at Bletchley station, without putting his hat and wig into jeopardy.

### **Bletchley Station.**

Distance to London, 47—Birmingham, 65½ miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>		<i>Places E. of Station.</i>	
Bletchley .. ..	1 mile.	FENNY STRATFORD .. ..	1 mile.
Newton Longville .. ..	2½ miles.	WOBURN .. ..	5½ miles.
		Bow Brickhill .. ..	4 —

IN taking a survey of the surrounding country from this station, Bletchley appears close to the line on the left. On the extreme left, Drayton Parslow can be distinguished, and a little in advance of it is the village



of Newton Longville. More distant is Whaddon Chace and Hall, in which Queen Elizabeth was entertained by Arthur Lord Grey; and in which Spencer, the poet, who was secretary to that nobleman, frequently resided. The village of Whaddon contains 889 inhabitants, and is celebrated as having been the birth-place of Richard Cox, one of the principal composers of our English Liturgy, and also as having given to Villiers, the celebrated favourite of James I. and Charles I., his first title, namely, that of Baron.

On the right of the station, and standing on a gentle eminence, at a distance of rather more than a mile, is the little market town of Fenny Stratford. This place takes its distinguishing appellation from the nature of the ground by which it is surrounded. In 1665, it was almost depopulated by a plague, and it has not yet recovered from its effects. It at present contains 635 inhabitants, who are chiefly supported by travellers and lace making.

Continuing our survey from the Bletchley station, the village of Water Eaton is seen on the right, in the foreground; and on the richly wooded hills which rise beyond, the three Brickhills are still discernible. In the beautiful vale beyond these hills, and, of course, invisible from the railway, stands the healthy town of Woburn. This town is about six miles from the station, and occupies a gentle eminence on the main road from London to Leeds. It is surrounded with plantations of evergreen, and consists of four broad and handsome streets, which intersect each other at right angles. In the centre of the town is a noble market house, erected by the Duke of Bedford, in the Tudor

style of architecture. The church was erected by the last abbot of Woburn, and being nearly covered with ivy, has a remarkably beautiful appearance. In the immediate vicinity of the town is Woburn Abbey, the seat of his grace the Duke of Bedford. It occupies the site of an ancient Cistercian Abbey, and is surrounded by a noble and extensive park; but to attempt to describe all the splendid adornments of this magnificent seat,—the statues, paintings, galleries, and columns,—the noble Ionic entrance, the artificial lake, the miniature temple, and all the other valuable works of art, which unbounded wealth and refined taste have collected together,—would be very inconsistent with the brevity required in a Road Book. We will, therefore, here conclude our survey, and suppose ourselves again bounding with the fleetness of the mountain roe along our iron pathway.

After rapidly sweeping through a cutting, we cross the London road by a stupendous iron bridge, which has a most noble appearance from below, and come to what was formerly known as the Denbigh Hall station. Here, for several months after the first opening of the railway, the trains were accustomed to stop, and the traveller had to adopt the ancient methods of conveyance, for the performance of the next thirty-eight miles of his journey. To describe in all its serio-comic reality the scene which this now secluded spot was wont then to present, would require the pen of a Washington Irving. Luggage lost, tickets missing, coaches overfilled, and a thousand other disastrous occurrences, altogether formed a spectacle which we would defy the most sorrowful disciple of Heraclitus

to view without a smile. All the busy multitudes, however, that so lately thronged this spot, and rendered it a scene of intense animation, have now vanished, like the fabric of Mirza's vision; and as we rapidly sweep by, and look in vain for some tokens of animation, we are reminded of the feelings which travellers have had while sitting on the ruins of some ancient city. The building called Denbigh Hall, respecting which it is very probable our reader may have formed the same conception as ourselves, and imagined it to be the august mansion of some illustrious grandee, is nothing but a paltry public house, or "Tom and Jerry shop," as we heard an indignant fellow-traveller contemptuously style it, which has taken the liberty of assuming this magnificent appellation. Tradition ascribes the origin of the name to the circumstance of Lord Denbigh having been compelled to tarry here for a night, through an accident happening to his carriage; and also informs us that his lordship left some property to his host in return for the kindness with which he had been entertained; but whether this story is deserving of credit, or has merely been invented for the amusement of the visitors at this Denbigh Hall, we pretend not to say. After leaving this *ci-divant* station, and passing through a cutting three quarters of a mile in length, we perceive on the left the church of Loughton, and also that of Shenstone, which is a very good specimen of the Norman style of architecture. Close to the line on the right is the village of Bradwell, where was formerly a priory of Black Canons, founded in the reign of Stephen, and of which the abbey, transformed into a farm house, may

still be seen standing on the left of the line. A short cutting, which is crossed by a bridge handsomely faced in a rustic style, brings us to Wolverton station.

### WOLVERTON STATION.

Distance to London, 52½—Birmingham, 59¾ miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>				<i>Places E. of Station.</i>			
BUCKINGHAM .. ..	10½	miles.		Wolverton .. ..	1	mile.	
BRACKLEY .. ..	17½	—		NEWPORT PAGNELL .. ..	4	miles.	
STONEV STRATFORD ..	2	—		FENNY STRATFORD .. ..	2	—	
				OLNEY .. ..	9	—	

THIS being the central, and consequently the most important station between London and Birmingham, the buildings connected with it are on a scale of unparalleled magnificence. In addition to the locomotive engine house on the left, where these immense machines are manufactured, repaired, and kept in store, there is an extensive depôt for goods on the right, and an area of several acres set apart for the reception of cattle. The style of architecture chiefly employed is the Doric; the beautiful simplicity of which harmonises well with the character of the buildings. But no useless ornament is employed: all is simple, grand, and imposing. Those passengers who wish to take some refreshment after a ride of fifty-two miles, have here ten minutes allowed them for that purpose. The town of Wolverton, hitherto unnoticed on the map of Great Britain, is now rapidly rising into importance; houses are springing up on every side, streets are being laid out, and a large and busy population is rapidly gathering; whilst its fame as the birth-place of English fire steeds is spreading through the civilized world. Previously to the commencement of

the railway, it contained only 417 inhabitants; but now, the railway company alone give direct employment to nearly a thousand hands.

This station will be found the most favourable for travellers proceeding to the towns of Stoney Stratford, Buckingham, Newport Pagnel, and Olney. The first of these places stands on the banks of the Ouse, one mile south-east of the station, and contains 1,700 inhabitants. It is celebrated in English history as having been the place where Richard III., when Duke of Gloucester, seized Edward V. It has suffered greatly from accidental fires, 53 houses having been burned to the ground in 1736, and 113 in 1742. Prior to the introduction of waggons, it was a noted place of rendezvous for pack horses conveying goods to London, and the traffic through it is still very great.

Eight miles south-west of Stoney Stratford, is the ancient county town of Buckingham. Respecting the derivation of its name, etymologists differ widely; but it appears most probable that the Saxon *Bucca*, which signifies a stag, lies at the root, since, in the early ages, the neighbourhood abounded with forests well stocked with deer. It is pleasantly situated on the river Ouse, which nearly encompasses the town, and is crossed by three stone bridges. The trade chiefly consists in the sorting of wool, the tanning of leather, and the manufacture of lace. The church stands on the site of an ancient baronial castle. It is a handsome structure, with a square embattled tower, and is internally elegantly fitted up in the Grecian style of architecture. Two miles west of Buckingham is Stowe Park, the magnificent seat of the Duke of Buckingham



and Chandos. The mansion was originally built by Sir Richard Temple, K.B., who died in 1697; it was enlarged by his son, Lord Cobham, and was brought to its present state of unrivalled magnificence by the late Marquis of Buckingham. The gardens or pleasure grounds of Stowe are more celebrated than even the mansion itself: they comprehend a space of more than 500 acres; and contain a broad lake, a beautiful cascade, and a noble monument to Lord Cobham; together with a profusion of statues, temples, and every species of architectural adornment. A building in the flower gardens contains the mineralogical and geological collections of the Abbé Haüy, and an immense number of specimens in every branch of natural history collected by the Duke of Buckingham.

Newport Pagnell is a well built market town, lying six miles north-east of the station, and containing 3,385 inhabitants. The latter part of its name is derived from the family of Paganell, to whom the manor descended from the powerful baron, William Fitzansculf, who held it at the time of the conquest. The church stands on an eminence which affords a fine prospect of the surrounding country; and in the churchyard may be seen the beautiful epitaph, written by Cowper, on Thomas Abbott Hamilton.

The other town which we mentioned as lying at a convenient distance from the Wolverton station, was that of Olney. This town lies ten miles north-east from the station, and, in common with the two last mentioned places, stands on the banks of the Ouse. It has a population of 2,418. The bridge over the Ouse is a handsome structure, consisting of five large arches,



and two smaller ones. In the church, which is a large and ancient edifice, an unusually large number of celebrated literary personages have regularly officiated ; amongst whom we may notice Moses Browne, author of *Piscatory Eclogues* ; John Newton, the popular preacher and writer ; Thomas Scott, the celebrated biblical commentator ; and Henry Gauntlett, who wrote on the *Apocalypse*. Of all the great names, however, that are associated with Olney, there is none which recalls so many pleasing remembrances as that of the poet Cowper. It was to this place that he retired to seclude himself from intercourse with a world, the rude gaze of which was alone sufficient to frighten his timid spirit ; and here, under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Newton, referred to above, he was in some measure relieved from that deep religious despondency into which he had fallen, and was enabled to form truer conceptions of that Divine system of religion which professes to be to all mankind glad tidings of great joy. Should our traveller be visiting Olney, we would sincerely recommend him to pay a visit to the house and garden of this amiable poet ; and if he has ever dropped a tear on the grave of Byron's dog, in Newstead Abbey, perhaps he may not be unwilling to bestow the same tribute of sympathy on Cowper's hare, in his garden at Olney ; for, although Puss may not perhaps have been bewailed in elegiac strains quite so pathetic as those inscribed on Boatswain's tomb, yet her memory, also, is preserved in immortal verse, and future ages will hear of her innocent attempts to divert the melancholy of her sorrowful master.

## CHAPTER V.

## WOLVERTON TO ROADE.

Seven miles and a half.

UPON leaving Wolverton station, we behold directly before us the lofty steeple of Hanslope church, which, in point of conspicuousness, may almost vie with that of Harrow church. The delightful prospect which is now unfolded before us in every direction, includes Bradwell Wharf, Linford, and Mill Mead, on the right, and the village of Wolverton on the left. After crossing the Grand Junction Canal by a handsome iron bridge, and the Newport Pagnell and Stratford road by one of a more ordinary description, we arrive at the stupendous viaduct over the Ouse valley. This magnificent structure consists of six arches of sixty feet span, besides six smaller ones placed in the abutments; and, to a spectator in the valley below, presents a most noble appearance. The view of the surrounding country, from the viaduct, is also exceedingly interesting. That on the right is thus beautifully described by a hand more graphic than ours:—

“ Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain  
Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o’er,  
Conducts the eye along his sinuous course  
Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank,

Stand, never overlooked, our favourite elms,  
 That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;  
 While far beyond and overthwart the stream,  
 That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale,  
 The sloping land recedes into the clouds;  
 Displaying on its varied side the grace  
 Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tower,  
 Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells  
 Just undulates upon the listening ear,  
 Groves, heaths, and smoking villages remote."

THE TASK.

One could almost imagine that the poet had written these lines while leaning on the parapet of the viaduct, and viewing the distant spire of Haversham church, and the pretty cottages of Mead Mill. On the left the scenery is not less interesting. There also—

The Ouse, dividing the well-watered land,  
 Now glitters in the sun, and now retires  
 As bashful, yet impatient to be seen.

And not far distant is the stupendous embankment and cast iron viaduct by which the Grand Junction Canal is carried over the valley; the towers of the two churches at Stoney Stratford rise above the viaduct; Wolverton is seen among the rich foliage on the extreme left; whilst the village of Cosgrove appears a little more in advance, and Castle Thorp in the distance. After the termination of the Wolverton embankment, we pass through a short cutting; and then proceed along another embankment, through some finely wooded country, with a fertile valley on the left, and the village of Hanslope, with its lofty church spire, which now appears to the greatest

advantage, on the right. Another cutting, a quarter of a mile in length, being passed, we discover on the left the villages of Stoke Bruern, Yardley Gobion, Pottersbury, and Furthro, and also Whittlebury Forest, all of which are in the distance; whilst, amongst the adjacent woodlands, the picturesque village of Grafton Regis, with the tower of its venerable church, can be distinctly perceived. This village is celebrated in history as having been the place where the clandestine marriage between Edward IV. and the widow of Sir John Gray, of Groby, was solemnized.

On the right is the village of Hartwell, and the forest of Salcey, which, together with that of Whittlebury, which bounds the view on the left, is under the superintendence of the Duke of Grafton. These forests formed part of the ancient woodlands of Northamptonshire, the remains of which are still very extensive. The three forests of Rockingham, Whittlebury, and Salcey, occupy 20,000 acres; and the chaces, purlieu woods, and plantations, are computed to cover 20,000 more; so that this county contains upon the whole about 40,000 acres of woodland territory.

The scenery on the left retains its interest for several miles. The country surrounding Stoney Stratford forms a fine rear view; and Easton and Stoke Parks soon add to the beauties of the landscape. The former of these, which, till lately, belonged to the Earls of Pomfret, has been rendered eminent by the splendid collection of ancient marbles and pictures with which the mansion was decorated. The statues were presented to the university of Oxford, in 1755, by the Countess who was so highly celebrated on

account of her literary attainments. Stoke Park is a highly decorated spot; and the mansion, which was erected in the reign of Charles I., is a noble edifice. Immediately after coming within sight of these parks, we cross the boundary line between Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire; and are prepossessed in favour of the latter county, by the interesting appearance of some pretty thatched cottages, which stand on each side of the line, and constitute the village of Ashton. Here the embankment, which has extended nearly a mile, and afforded so many delightful prospects of the surrounding country, comes to a termination. After passing through three moderate cuttings, and under Roade skew bridge,—which is a handsome erection, faced with dark grey stone,—we reach the Roade station.

### ROADE STATION.

Distance to London, 60—Birmingham,  $52\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Place W. of Station.</i>				<i>Places E. of Station.</i>			
Stoke Bruern	..	..	1½ mile.	NORTHAMPTON	..	5 miles.	
				Piddington	..	3½ —	

THE village of Roade, of which a momentary glimpse might occasionally be caught before arriving at the station, is a small village on the right of the line, and contains a population of 553.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ROADE TO WEEDON.

Nine miles and  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

VERY shortly after leaving this station, we enter the stupendous excavation made through the Blisworth ridge. As we rapidly sweep through this narrow defile, which is one mile and three quarters in length, and look up at its lofty walls, which are often sixty feet in height, we cannot help admiring the astonishing achievements of united physical force, guided and applied by one directing mind ; and as, without straining a muscle, we pass with the speed of the eagle in its swiftest flight, through the heart of lofty mountains and solid rocks, the pride of our heart would almost lead us to doubt whether we belong to the same order of beings as the uncivilized savage, who has no pathway through the desert save the track formed by his own and his forefathers' feet, and which he uses in common with the wild beast of the wilderness. When the open country again appears, the most interesting scenery lies on the right. Hunsbury Hill, Dunston Wood, and Harpole Hill, with the village of Wooton, among the hills, and the conspicuous village of Milton, or Middleton, and its neat church, form a landscape which is far from being void of beauty. Bugbrook Downs appear in advance ; and Gayton



church, standing on the rising ground, throws that interest over the landscape which the appearance of a sanctuary, however humble, always bestows. Immediately before our arrival at Blisworth station, we catch a glimpse of the pretty village of Blisworth, which, standing on the gently sloping ground on the right, has a very lovely appearance. The number of its inhabitants is 769.

### Blisworth Station.

Distance to London,  $63\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $48\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>					<i>Places E. of Station.</i>				
Gayton	..	..	..	1½ mile.	Middleton, or Milton Malson	1	mile.		
TOWCESTER	..	..	..	4 miles.	Rothersthorpe	..	..	2 miles.	

THREE miles and a half south-west from this station, on the banks of the Tove, is the ancient market town of Towcester. From the coins and other relics which have from time to time been discovered in its neighbourhood, it is supposed to be of Roman origin. In the church is a monument of Archdeacon Sponne, who held the living in the reign of Henry VI., and who conferred much posthumous benefit upon his fellow townsmen, by the large amount of property which he devoted by his will to the paving of the town, the establishment of a free grammar school, and other public purposes. The population amounts to 2,671, who are chiefly supported by the manufacture of bobbin lace, boots, and shoes.

Upon leaving Blisworth station, we proceed along an embankment, which terminates after we have crossed the Grand Junction Canal. We then run by the little

village of Gayton Wharf on the left, glide rapidly through a short excavation, and enter the wide expanse of beautiful country called the valley of the Nene. The prospect is interrupted on the left by a ridge of hills which approach close to the line; but on the right, and in advance, it comprises an extent of many miles. The eye, in ranging over the wide valley, views with delight the wide sweep of gentle hills forming its distant boundary, and the broad and verdant meadows skirting the stream which winds through its capacious bosom. The tract of meadow land which commences in this part of the valley, attends the Nene in the whole of its progress through the county, and, by reason of its sinuosity, exceeds sixty miles in length. The river Nene is the principal one in Northamptonshire; it becomes navigable at Northampton; and, after crossing the Isle of Ely, and forming part of the western boundary of Norfolk, falls into that part of the German Ocean called the Wash.

The principal villages now comprised within the field of vision, and which, in succession, become clearly distinguishable, are Rothersthorpe, Dunston, Harpole, Upper Classthorpe, and Great Brington, on the brow of a distant hill. In the extreme distance, five miles from the railway, and scarcely distinguishable, except under very favourable circumstances, is the town of Northampton, the capital of the county.

The derivation of the name of this town has had very little light thrown upon it by the investigations of the most acute philologists. Some have supposed Northampton to be a contraction of *North Aufonton*, *Aufona* being the ancient name of

the river Nene upon which it stands. This etymology having a somewhat clumsy appearance, others have maintained that *Ham tune* was the name of the town in the time of the Saxons, and that *North* was prefixed to distinguish it from other towns of the same name. To give a tolerable historical account of a town which has been the scene of so many remarkable events as Northampton, would require several chapters, rather than a solitary paragraph. Suffice it to say, therefore, that it is a place of very great antiquity; that it was burned by the Danes in 1010; sacked by the Northumbrians, under Earl Morcar, in 1064; and strongly fortified in the reign of William the Conqueror; since which time it has frequently been honoured by the presence of royalty, and the convention of councils and parliaments. The decisive battle between the houses of York and Lancaster, in which Henry VI. was defeated and taken prisoner, was fought near the town; and many of the illustrious personages who fell on the king's side, amongst whom were the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Viscount Beaumont, and Lord Egremont, were interred in St. John's Hospital, and the Church of the Grey Friars. In 1675, an accidental fire consumed 600 houses, and is calculated to have done damage to the amount of £150,000. The effects of this catastrophe, however, were soon repaired by the munificence of Charles II., and the vigorous exertions of the Earl of Northampton; and from the ashes of the old town rose the clean, regular, and handsome streets which now excite the admiration of every beholder. The town is divided into four nearly equal portions by two spacious streets,

which are nearly a mile in length, and which intersect each other at right angles. The County Hall is an admirable specimen of the Corinthian order. The churches are four in number, namely: All Saints', a spacious Grecian edifice of the Ionic order, built soon after the fire, and containing a statue of Charles II., and another of the Right Hon. Spencer Percival, gracefully sculptured in marble by Chantrey; St. Giles', a large cruciform structure, displaying various styles of English architecture; St. Peter's, supposed to have been erected about the time of the Conquest, and exhibiting a most beautiful and perfect specimen of the Norman style of architecture, of which, indeed, some of the finest models may be found in its exquisitely wrought details; and St. Sepulchre's, which is supposed to have been built by the Knights Templars, after the model of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, at Jerusalem. The principal charitable institutions are, the General Infirmary, a handsome building of white stone, erected and fitted up at an expense of nearly £25,000, and the hospitals of St. John and St. Thomas à Becket; together with various educational establishments, supported by subscription and endowment. The population is 15,351; and the principal articles of manufacture are boots and shoes, stockings and lace.

Proceeding along the western declivity of the valley of the Nene, the village of Bugbrook, the church of which appears half hid among the trees, lies close to the line on the right. Its population is 863. On the left, the elevated tract called Bugbrook Downs interrupts the distant view, until a slight opening occurs,

when we are enabled to see as far as Littleborough Hill. The village of Littleborough now contains only 451 inhabitants; but was formerly a place of considerable importance, having been one of the four garrisoned towns which the Saxons took from the British in 571. Two miles east of Litchborough, but not visible from the railway, are the villages of Higham and Pattishall; and about one mile in a northerly direction is Farthingstone,—a little village which is interesting to the antiquary on account of the ruins of a Saxon fort which lie in the neighbourhood, and two subterranean chambers, which have lately been discovered.

In crossing the viaduct over the Harstone Brook, we obtain a favourable view of the aqueduct by which the Grand Junction Canal is carried over the same stream. A short cutting which follows brings us within sight of Upper and Nether Heyford, and Brington and Harpole Hill, all of which lie on the right. We then rapidly sweep by the foot of Alderman Hill, and suddenly plunge into the jaws of Stowe-hill tunnel. This tunnel is 500 yards in length, and passes under the great Holyhead road. The village of Stowe lies about a mile to the left. It is called Stowe-Nine-Churches, from the manor having had nine advowsons appended to it in the time of Henry VII. Upon issuing from this tunnel, a landscape of extreme beauty is presented to the eye: the canal approaches close to the line on the right; and a semicircle of woodland hills encloses a wide and fertile vale of surpassing loveliness. The embankment by which the railway is carried across the valley,



commences simultaneously with that of the Grand Junction Canal; and as they run nearly parallel with each other, they form an artificial valley, from which all view of the surrounding country is totally excluded. Among the unfortunate buildings thus shut out from the world, is the church of Weedon, the beauties of which the traveller along the turnpike road would formerly stop to admire; but of which he can now distinguish nothing save the top of the tower. After passing this incarcerated beauty with a smile of pity, we come within view of the village of Weedon, which lies close to the line, in a valley on the left; and, after crossing the viaduct over the Nene, are struck with the imposing appearance of its ancient thatched cottages, and extensive ranges of modern barracks.

### WEEDON STATION.

Distance to London,  $69\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $42\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>				<i>Places E. of Station.</i>			
Weedon Beck .. .. .	$\frac{1}{4}$	mile.		Floore .. .. .	$\frac{3}{4}$	mile.	
Stowe.. .. .	$1\frac{3}{4}$	—		NORTHAMPTON .. ..	$7\frac{3}{4}$	miles.	
DAVENTRY .. .. .	4	miles.		Church Brampton .. ..	$7\frac{1}{4}$	—	
Cold Higham .. .. .	$4\frac{3}{4}$	—					
TOWCESTER .. .. .	$8\frac{3}{4}$	—					
SOUTHAM .. .. .	14	—					

THE large village of Weedon, containing 1,439 inhabitants, is divided into Upper and Lower Weedon. The latter is bisected by the railway, and the former lies at a short distance on the left. It possesses considerable claims to antiquity, and is supposed by Camden, the celebrated antiquary of Queen Elizabeth's time, to have been the *Beneventa* of the Romans.

The village, however, is chiefly interesting to the stranger on account of its Royal Military Dépôt. This magnificent establishment, which is supposed to be equal to any of the kind in Europe, consists of a handsome centre and two detached wings, and is capable of containing 240,000 stand of small arms, with a proportionate quantity of artillery and ammunition. The barracks, in which troops are continually kept for the protection of the place, stand on the top of the hill, and are intended to accommodate 500 men. A cut made from the Grand Junction Canal to the magazines, for facilitating the conveyance of stores, gave considerable trouble to the engineers of the railway, by its having to be crossed at a height very little above its own level. This object was, however, at last effected by means of a drawbridge, of peculiar construction and extraordinary strength.

Four miles west of the Weedon station is the ancient town of Daventry. The name is a corruption of *Dwy-avon-tre*, which, in the ancient British language, signified the town of the two Avons, and evidently refers to its situation between the sources of the Leam, which falls into the western Avon, and the Nene, the ancient name of which was Aufona, or Avon. It was a place of considerable importance at the time of the Conquest, and has since been the scene of many important transactions, especially during the civil wars of the seventeenth century. It stands on a gentle eminence, sheltered on three sides by surrounding hills; and consists of two principal and several smaller streets. The population is 3,646; one half of which are employed in making shoes, and a considerable por-

tion of the remainder in the manufacture of whips. The government is vested in a corporation, which was first granted by King John.

The stranger in Daventry, whether the objects which he delights to contemplate be nature in the beautiful robe thrown over her by the hand of her Creator, or the venerable relics of other days, surrounded with the fascinating charm which the scythe of Time communicates to whatsoever it fails to destroy, must on no account omit a visit to Borough Hill. There, with the town of Daventry at his feet, he can command a noble and beautiful prospect as far as Naseby, Northampton, Weedon, and Coventry; and there he may spend hour after hour in examining the remains of an ancient Roman camp, broken ramparts thrown up by Roman hands, and vestiges of British and Roman tombs and dwellings. Stoical, indeed, must he be who can lean on one of these ancient ramparts, surrounded by the tombs of his ancestors, and gaze, without emotion, on the wide landscape smiling still with just the same loveliness that it did when the silver eagle of Rome glittered on the top of the mount, and the proud chieftains of Britain scowled on the symbol that told they were slaves. If the beholder be at all gifted with the powers of imagination, fifteen centuries will vanish before him, and he will fancy he is gazing on the woods and valleys where naked barbarians are lurking, and savage rites are being celebrated; but one glimpse of the railway stretching across the plain, and the little white cloud rising from the steam engine, will dissolve the spell, and bring a change o'er the spirit of his dream; he

will remember the ages that have rolled away, the changes which have taken place, and the mighty stride the intellect of man has taken, since the war chariots of Caractacus dashed across the plain now swept by the almost omnipotent steam engine.

## CHAPTER VII.

## WEEDON TO RUGBY.

Thirteen miles and a half.

LEAVING Weedon station, we pass close to the barracks and officers' rooms, go under the Northampton and Daventry road, and enter a lengthened cutting. Through occasional openings in the right hand bank, we now and then catch a glimpse of Brington Hill, Floore Hill, and Brockhall Park, the seat of S. R. Thornton, Esq. Upon emerging from this cutting, the commanding hill on the right, upon the brow of which Great Brington stands, is the most interesting object; but the hilly country on the left presents us with nothing of an attractive nature. After the Holyhead road has crossed the line at a very great angle, we pass through Mr. Thornton's beautiful grounds, and have our eyes charmed with the richness of its foliage,—and ought to have our ears also delighted with the lofty carolings of its feathered inhabitants; since, on the fine evenings in summer, the sweet warblings of these songsters of the grove, with the occasional accompaniment of the trumpet at the distant barracks, are said to form an harmonious and delightful concert: but the humble pedestrian only need expect to enjoy it; for the railway traveller will be sadly disappointed if he calculates



upon hearing any melody more euphonious than the snorting of the engine, and the rattling of the carriages.

The mansion of Brockhall presents its front to the railway, and has an imposing appearance surrounded with the large trees of the park. Brockhall Hill, and the village of Whilton, form the distant view on the right; whilst in the opposite direction is the village of Hall Norton, visible among the trees, and the town of Daventry, hid from our view by Borough Hill of which we have already spoken so largely. After we have passed Whilton Wharf, crossed the canal by a handsome iron bridge, and left Buckby Wharf on the right, the embankment, along which we have been proceeding for nearly two miles, terminates, and we soon afterwards enter Clay Hill cutting. This cutting soon terminates, and the open country again appears; but the only object of interest which is presented to our view is Borough Hill: this still continues to be a conspicuous object on the left, whenever the view is open in that direction. On the right lies Watford, a small village, with a population of 353. Its little church, with several of the houses, can be clearly distinguished amongst the woods which surround it.

### **Crick Station.**

Distance to London,  $73\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $38\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Place W. of Station.</i>				<i>Places E. of Station.</i>			
Ashby St. Ledgers..	..	..	1 mile.	Crick ..	..	..	2 miles.
				Yelvertoft ..	..	..	4 —
				West Haddon ..	..	..	5 —

THE village of Crick lies two miles north-east from the station, and is a place of very little note. The number of its inhabitants is 945.

The hills which now appear stretching before us, would seem to interpose an inseparable barrier to our further progress. They form the separating ridge between the valley of the Avon and that of the Ouse and Nene, and contain the sources of rivers which flow to different sides of the island. In approaching them we enter a cutting which gradually becomes deeper and deeper, and at length brings us to the entrance of the Grand Kilsby Tunnel. This stupendous work is 2,398 yards in length, twenty-four feet in width, and twenty-two in height. But these figures, astonishing as they are, can furnish no idea of the difficulty of the undertaking; for the varied nature of the strata to be cut through, and the vastness of the quicksands to be drained, presented difficulties which it is impossible for a person who is not practically acquainted with undertakings of this nature duly to appreciate. Whilst contemplating modern works of such astonishing magnitude as this, we cannot avoid instituting a comparison between them and the lauded monuments of antiquity; and much as the cyclopean structures of the ancient world have been admired and extolled, we think they are equalled, if not surpassed, by many of the stupendous works which have lately been completed in our own country. The railway along which we are travelling is, doubtless, as great a work as the pyramids of Egypt; and the tunnel through which we are passing, is just about the same length as the passage which

Xerxes cut through Mount Athos, and which occupied his whole army for three years. Were we to confine our attention to tunnels alone, we might point to one on the Grand Junction Canal, 3,080 yards in length; another on the Thames and Severn Canal, 4,300 yards; and to that on the Huddersfield Canal, which is no less than 7,000 yards, or nearly four miles in length;—works which would not suffer much by a comparison with the most colossal erections of Egyptian kings, or the mightiest monuments of primeval pride. The greater effect which the grandeur of the ancient structures produces on the mind, arises from the chief, if not the only, design of those who erected them having been to create astonishment in the minds of the beholders; whilst, in the works of the moderns, utility alone is aimed at, and it is generally not until after a process of mental ratiocination that we become duly aware of their amazing magnitude.

In passing through the tunnel, a gleam of light is now and then seen descending through the ventilating shafts which are sunk through the hill. These shafts are twenty-one in number, and average nearly 100 feet in depth; whilst two of them are no less than sixty feet in diameter. To stand on the top of the hill, and look down one of these huge caverns, is said to produce feelings of an awfully sublime and terrific nature.

Upon the conclusion of our subterranean flight, we behold a wide extent of well wooded but uninteresting country. Dunchurch lies about six miles distant on the left, and we can just distinguish the square tower of its beautiful Gothic church. Having crossed the

boundary line between Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, we pass under Moreton Hill bridge, which consists of three arches, of fifty-four feet span, and obtain a view of Dunsland on the right, and Hill Moreton, with its exceedingly pretty church, on the left.

As we proceed, the scenery assumes a more interesting character. The village of Lilbourne appears on the right; and amongst the distant hills beyond it, lie Yelvertoft, Claycolon, and Elkington. A deep and rather lengthened cutting brings us opposite the little villages of Clifton and Newton, which lie at a short distance on the right. Brownsover soon afterwards appears in the same direction. It stands upon an elevated spot, near the confluence of the Swift and the Avon; and is worthy of notice as being the birth-place of Lawrence Sheriff, founder of the celebrated school at the neighbouring town of Rugby. The village of Newbold can be distinguished in the distance; and the pretty hills on which it stands form an interesting back-ground. On the right, we can perceive a few of the houses of Rugby; and after having entered upon an embankment, we speedily arrive at the Rugby station.

### RUGBY STATION.

Distance to London, 83—Birmingham, 29 $\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>					<i>Places E. of Station.</i>				
RUGBY	..	..	..	$\frac{1}{2}$ mile.	LUTTERWORTH	..	..	6 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles.	
Dunchurch	..	..	..	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles.	MARKET HARBOUROUGH	..	17 $\frac{1}{2}$ —		
					LEICESTER	..	17 $\frac{3}{4}$ —		

THE Lutterworth road passes beneath the railway at this station, and the beautiful bridge by which the line is carried over it, is in the purely Gothic style of architecture. The introduction of this style into the building of a bridge, had to us an exceedingly novel appearance, accustomed as we had been to associate its massy pillars and high embowed roof—

“ With those deep solitudes and awful cells  
Where heavenly pensive Contemplation dwells,  
And ever musing Melancholy reigns.”

The reason of so gorgeous a style being employed in the construction of this bridge, arose from the desire of the trustees of the Rugby school, that it should harmonise with the buildings of that institution : they, at the same time, giving £1,000 towards the increased expenditure.

The town of Rugby is pleasantly situated upon rising ground, on the left of the line. It is supposed to have been one of the many fortresses erected in the reign of Stephen, and to have derived its name from Henry de Rokeby, who possessed it in the following century. The streets present an incongruous mixture of modern brick houses, and ancient plastered edifices with thatched roofs. The latter, however, are rapidly decreasing in number, and several entirely new streets have been formed during the last few years. The church is an ancient structure, with a massive square and embattled tower, and is built in the early style of English architecture. The population of the town is 2,501. The Grammar School, which we have already mentioned, and by which especially Rugby is distin-



guished, is a noble and magnificent establishment. It was founded in the reign of Elizabeth, and endowed with about eight acres of land, near the Foundling Hospital, in London, which produced, at that time, a very inconsiderable revenue. This revenue, however, like that of many other institutions similarly endowed, has gradually increased, as the land has become more valuable; and the trustees of the institution have now the annual disposal of no less a sum than £5,000. The trustees are twelve in number, and have the appointment of the masters, and the general superintendence of the school. The head master has a fixed salary of £113. 6s. 8*d.*, together with a house and land, besides an annual payment of six guineas per annum, for every boy on the foundation. Of the classics, there are six assistant masters; and the various modern languages, writing, drawing, and mathematics, have each their respective teachers. The number of boys receiving instruction in the school is usually about 300; of whom there are seldom more than fifty or sixty foundationers. Those boys only are eligible to the school who reside within five miles from the town, if in the county of Warwick, or within ten miles if in any other county. Belonging to the establishment are twenty-one exhibitions, of £60. per annum, and several fellowships, amounting in the aggregate to £1,000. per annum. The present magnificent edifice was erected in 1808, and forms a noble range of building in the Elizabethan style of architecture. The group is of a quadrangular form, and consists of spacious and lofty school rooms,—extensive apartments for the masters,—and an elegant chapel of

more modernized appearance, splendidly decorated in the interior, and containing a monument, by Chantrey, of Dr. James, the late head master of the school.

Lutterworth, a market town in Leicestershire, lies seven miles north-east from the station, on the small river Swift, and contains 2,262 inhabitants. It is chiefly interesting to the stranger as having been the scene of the venerable Wickliffe's pastoral labours, and the place where he first promulgated his glorious doctrines. In the church are preserved, his portrait, the communion cloth which he was accustomed to use, the pulpit in which he preached, and the chair in which he died. The bones of the reformer once rested here also; but after they had quietly reposed for forty years, the sanctity of the grave was violated, the poor remains of what once was Wickliffe were raised from their peaceful bed, and by the order of the Council of Constance publicly burned, to show the detestation in which the Court of Rome held his doctrines, and what they would do to his soul if they could reach it with their anathemas. His ashes were then scattered on the waters of the river, and thus dispersed over every part of the globe, emblematical, as the event has proved, of the still more extensive diffusion of the principles which he taught.

Near this station it is intended that the London and Birmingham Railway should be joined by the Midland Counties Railway. This railway will pass through Leicester, Loughborough, and Nottingham, and, by means of a branch to Derby, will join the North Midland line, and thus open a communication with Yorkshire, and the other northern counties.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## RUGBY TO COVENTRY.

Ten miles and  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

THE embankment upon which we entered before arriving at the Rugby station, continues for a short distance after leaving it, and affords a very pretty prospect of the valley on the right, in which the Swift and several other small rivers from Northamptonshire and Leicestershire unite their waters to form the Avon. Newbold-upon-Avon appears prettily situated on the opposite side of the valley; and across the fields on the left, the spire of Bilton church can be perceived, rising above the surrounding woods. Bilton is celebrated as having been the residence of Addison, during the latter part of his life, and the place where he wrote his admirable "Evidences of the Christian Religion,"—in which we behold the brightest star that ever shone in the firmament of British literature, veiling its brightness with the lovelier rays of sanctified erudition and ingenuous piety. Long Lawford cutting interrupts the prospect for about half a mile; at the conclusion of which we pass under Long Lawford bridge, and perceive the village lying close to the line on the right. There are three Lawfords; Long Lawford, Church Lawford, and Little Lawford; of which, the two former only can be

seen from the railway. Balbrook Grange also appears on the right ; and Mount Pleasant gives a somewhat pleasant appearance to the otherwise tame scenery on the left. After another deep cutting, the scenery on the right assumes features of increased interest. The eye ranges over a considerable extent of beautiful rising ground in the distance ; whilst, in the foreground, it rests with delight upon the rich charms of the valley through which the Avon rolls its sacred flood. There are many Avons to be found in the kingdom ; but the valley along which we are now proceeding, is the valley of *the* Avon,—the Avon upon whose sunny banks—

“Sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy’s child,  
Warbled his native wood-notes wild.”

As we rapidly glide along so sacred a vale, we would fain suspend our description for a moment, that the traveller may give the tribute of a reverential pause to the memory of the bard with whose immortal name the Avon will for ever be associated. When, on our solitary walks, we never can pass a spot where genius has poured forth its magnificent creations in lofty strains of impassioned poetry, without seeming to feel—

“Those god-like breathings in the air,  
Which mutely tell her spirit hath been there.”

And, notwithstanding the desperately prosaic character of a railway, the cacophonious rattling of the carriages, and the whirlwind rapidity of our flight, we cannot look down into the valley where Shakspeare sung,

without peopling the lofty elms which shade the banks of his gentle Avon with the shades of kings and heroes moving along in the sceptred pomp of tragedy, whilst all the passions throng around them, “filled with fury, rapt, inspired.”

Five miles from Rugby the Brandon embankment commences, which is two miles in length, and affords some beautiful prospects. The village of Bretsford, with its rich woodlands, and the more remote Brinkslow, form the first pretty scene on the right. On the left, the country has the same sylvan appearance, the fields being, in general, separated from each other by rows of goodly timber trees; and amongst the profusion of foliage, the house of Mr. Hemming, the contractor, and the village of Wolstone, can be distinctly perceived.

### Brandon Station.

Distance to London, 89—Birmingham,  $23\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>					<i>Places E. of Station.</i>				
Wolstone	..	..	..	$\frac{1}{2}$ mile.	Brinklow	..	..	$2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.	
Ryton..	..	..	..	2 miles.	Church Lawford	..	..	3 —	

BRANDON WOOD bounds the prospect in the direction we are travelling, and the village of Brandon quickly appears on the right of the line. The railway here crosses the Avon, by a noble viaduct of fifteen arches; and for a while that river gives a highly picturesque character to the scenery on the left; but it very soon stretches away into the distant country. We now have Ryton Wood before us; and in the foreground, on the left, appears the tower of Ryton



church. Upon a little hill on the right, are the remains of what once was Brandon castle. This fortress was first built soon after the conquest, was destroyed in the reign of Henry III., and having been subsequently rebuilt, was finally destroyed by Cromwell, who is said to have built the neighbouring church out of its ruins. We now have Ryton Wood on the left, Willenhall Wood in the distance, and Brandon Wood on the right. These woods form part of the few remains of the mighty forest of Arden, which anciently stretched from the Severn on the one hand, to the Trent on the other.

After passing through a cutting about three quarters of a mile in length, and which is crossed, at a very great angle, by a handsome skew bridge, we enter a wide extent of open country, and catch the first glimpse of the Coventry spires. From the embankment along which we now proceed, we can also see on the right, Stoke, Ernsford Grange, Binley, and the woods surrounding Combe Abbey. The last mentioned place takes its name from a religious house of the Cistercian order, which formerly existed there, and which was founded in the reign of King Stephen. Some remains of the cloister still exist, and upon the site of the ancient building, a splendid mansion has been erected, of which Earl Craven is the present proprietor. After passing the seat of "Squire Goodall, the banker," also on the right of the line, we cross the Sow by a beautiful viaduct, of seven arches, and obtain a favourable view of Baginton Hall, the residence of the Rev. W. D. Bromley, embedded in the dense woods on the left.

The village of Baginton contains 257 inhabitants. The castle, which it anciently possessed, was, in the reign of Richard II., honoured with the presence of the Duke of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV., on the eve of the day appointed for the combat, which was to take place at Coventry, between him and the Duke of Norfolk. Rapidly proceeding in the direction that the spires of Coventry are seen rising majestically above the intervening woods, we sweep past Whitley Abbey, which stands commandingly on the left, cross a seven-arched viaduct over the Sherbourne valley, and a smaller one over the Holyhead road, and enter a deep cutting, which commences as soon as the embankment terminates, is crossed by five elegant bridges, and, after continuing about a mile, brings us to the Coventry station.

### COVENTRY STATION.

Distance to London, 94—Birmingham, 18 $\frac{1}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Places W. of Station.</i>					<i>Places E. of Station.</i>				
Baginton .. .. .	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	miles.			Meriden .. .. .	6	miles.		
Kenilworth.. .. .	4 $\frac{1}{4}$	—			NUNEATON.. .. .	8 $\frac{3}{4}$	—		
Leamington .. .. .	8	—			Over Whitacre .. .. .	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	—		
WARWICK .. .. .	9 $\frac{3}{4}$	—			Hinckley .. .. .	13 $\frac{1}{4}$	—		
Henley-in-Arden .. .. .	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	—			ATHERSTONE .. .. .	14	—		

WE are now in the bottom of a cutting, and not the slightest indication can be perceived of the proximity of a large and populous city. This produces a very disagreeable feeling in the mind of those who have experienced the exhilarating effect (and who has not) of entering a populous town on the top of a stage coach, especially when the lamps are all lit, the shops brightly illuminated, and the footpath thronged

with passers to and fro. A bridge, however, which crosses the railway usually has its parapet adorned with a row of human faces, and the physiognomical traveller may amuse himself with marking the various degrees of wonderment depicted upon each; some seeming to intimate that their owners know quite as much about steam engines as George Stephenson himself; whilst others seem to gaze upon the belching animal with as much amazement and dread as the inhabitants of the New World looked upon the winged offspring of the Sun that brought to their shores Columbus and his adventurous Spaniards.

The city of Coventry stands upon a gentle eminence on the right of the station, and about a quarter of a mile distant from it. The story of its varied fortunes forms a deeply interesting narrative, and is intimately interwoven with the most eventful portions of the history of our country. Its name in the most ancient records is written *Conventrey*, and has evidently been given to it on account of the convent which stood on its site in the tenth century, and which was burned by Canute, the Dane. The history of the town commences with St. Osburgh being abbess of this convent; and we are informed that, after its destruction, a monastery was built upon its site by Leofric, Earl of Mercia, and Lady Godiva, his wife. The legend respecting this earl and his lady, occupies a prominent place in the early history of the city. The tradition is, that the countess rode through the city in a state of nudity, in order to procure the exemption of the citizens from various oppressive services and taxations. This feat of the countess, and the miraculous punishment of a tailor,

who is said to have been the only individual indiscreet enough to look from his hiding place, and upon whose veracity, therefore, the actual performance of the task by her ladyship must depend, is commemorated by a silly figure, which goes by the name of "Peeping Tom," and stands at the corner of a house in High-street, and also by a triennial procession, which is generally viewed by thousands of individuals, from all the neighbouring towns. The south window of Trinity Church is decorated with portraits of Godiva and her husband, and also with a poetical inscription reciting the legends respecting them. Leofric died in 1057.

In 1355, the erection of the city walls was commenced. These extended three miles in circuit, were strengthened with thirty-two towers, and contained twelve gates, defended by portcullises; but they were demolished in 1662, as a punishment on the inhabitants for the part they had taken in the civil war. There have been two parliaments held in Coventry, the one by Henry IV., usually called *Parliamentum Indoc-torum*, from all lawyers having been excluded from it; and the other by Henry VI., styled by the Yorkists, *Parliamentum Diabolicum*, from the great number of attainders issued by it against the partisans of the "White Rose." In the war between the rival houses of York and Lancaster, Coventry was seized for the Yorkists by the Earl of Warwick; and Edward IV. was repulsed from its gates. As a punishment for this, the king, after he had gained the battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury, deprived the citizens of their charter, which he withheld until redeemed by

a payment of 500 marks. During the parliamentary war, the king, who had erected his standard at Nottingham, was refused admittance into the town, and it was shortly afterwards regularly garrisoned by the republican forces, and the very women were employed in strengthening its defences; nevertheless, when the restoration took place, and Charles II. ascended the throne of his fathers, the people of Coventry were among the loudest in their expressions of gladness, proclaiming him king with every mark of exultation and triumph; and causing even the public conduits to flow with wine.

The city of Coventry, with a district of four miles round it, constitutes a county of itself, under the title of "The City and County of Coventry." The government is vested in a corporation, the charter of which was first granted by Edward III., in 1344, and the freedom of which is obtained by a servitude of seven years to any branch of trade within the city or its liberties. The population of Coventry is 27,070. The weaving of ribands is the staple trade; but the manufacture of watches is also carried on to a considerable extent.

The houses are neat and well built, and are now assuming a somewhat modern appearance; the more ancient parts of the city having been lately taken down, and many new streets formed. The principal buildings are, a neat Theatre; a handsome range of Barracks; a respectable County Hall; the Drapers' Hall; and St. Mary's Hall, which is a beautiful and magnificent structure, in the later style of English architecture, designed for the larger meetings and civic entertain-



ments of the corporation, and replete, internally, with the richest and most elaborate ornaments.

Coventry was a cathedral city until the year 1188, when the seat of the diocese was removed to Lichfield. Of the cathedral, which was formerly a magnificent and sumptuous edifice, scarcely a vestige can now be discerned : its proud walls have long since crumbled to the ground, and dwelling houses have been erected on its consecrated site. St. Michael's is now the principal church. It is altogether a splendid structure ; but is chiefly remarkable on account of its lofty, finely proportioned, and richly decorated steeple. This beautiful piece of architecture, which is 300 feet in height, was commenced in 1373, and finished in 1395. There is, also, the venerable church of the Holy Trinity ; the interesting one of St. John the Baptist, with its square embattled tower, and four circular turrets ; and one dedicated to our Saviour, the ancient and beautiful steeple of which originally belonged to a monastery of Grey Friars.

Before we proceed with our description of the line, we will carry the traveller to a few of the many interesting towns which lie at a convenient distance from the Coventry station. Ten miles south-west, stands the venerable town of Warwick, the history of which is associated with that of the ancient Britons, and the wars of Caractacus. It is delightfully situated on a gently rising rock, which is washed on the north by the Avon, and surrounded by rich and diversified scenery. On the south of the town, the venerable castle rises in stately magnificence, and carries the mind back to the gloomy ages of baronial ascendancy. The stranger

who may visit this relic of feudal times, however high his expectations may have been raised, can hardly avoid being struck with surprise at the surpassing beauty of its situation, the noble grandeur of its buildings, and perfect state of its preservation. The lawns, gardens, and shrubberies, also, which form the castle grounds, are lovely spots; and the walks, which are occasionally cut in the solid rock, and overshadowed by cedars of Lebanon, and other noble and lofty trees, are well suited to the high-wrought feelings of one who has been pacing the gloomy galleries and stately halls of powerful barons and illustrious chieftains.

Upon the banks of the Avon, about a mile above Warwick, is a celebrated rock, which goes by the name of Guy's Cliff. Hewn in this rock there is a cave, in which it is said that the famous Guy, Earl of Warwick, lived many years in voluntary concealment, within sight of the proud turrets of his own castle, and the casements at which his widowed countess might occasionally be seen.

The stranger who has been led by curiosity to Warwick, and whose spirit has ever been stirred by the wizard hand of Scott, will not be very liable to forget his proximity to the famed castle of Kenilworth. The town of Kenilworth is five miles north from Warwick. It contains 3,097 inhabitants, and is well and handsomely built; but would not be deemed worthy of our notice, were it not for the superb ruins of its castle,—that castle, in the spacious courts and stately halls of which the lofty queen Elizabeth, with all the high-born ladies of her court, and the proud chivalry

of her land, were entertained by the favourite Leicester, with many a gorgeous pageant and sumptuous banquet; but whose mouldering turrets and ivy-clad walls now serve only to form a subject for the painter's pencil, or the pen of the moralist. The destruction of this magnificent fortress was effected by the ruthless soldiery of Cromwell, determined, it would seem, to equal the Goth and Vandal tribes in utter detestation of whatever was beautiful or grand.

From Kenilworth we will transport our reader to Leamington Priors, in order that the brilliant scenes of a fashionable watering place may dispel the cloud of gloom which has, doubtless, gathered on his brow, while contemplating the frowning towers of Warwick, and the venerable ruins of Kenilworth. Leamington lies two miles and a half from Warwick, in an easterly direction. Its importance is owing to the celebrity of its mineral springs, which, in a space of twenty-three years, have raised it from an inconsiderable hamlet to a large and elegant town, with a population of 6,209. The springs are of three kinds,—sulphureous, saline, and chalybeate. The assembly rooms, libraries, hotels, and baths, are equally handsome in their appearance, and splendid in their decorations. Here, if anywhere, the invalid may forget his ailments, and the faded beauty recover her charms and spirits. We must confess, however, that the false glitter and pageantry of a watering place have no charms for us. Instead of exciting gay and buoyant feelings, they bring over our spirits a gloom which the most dismal scenes in nature would fail to produce. The balls, concerts, and promenades, seem to speak of

happiness and enjoyment ; but, as the gay figures have passed by us, and their light laugh has fallen on our ear, we have noticed that the garland of gladness which seemed to encircle their brow was faded and dead, for its freshness had been withered by a cold blast from the grave.

The short distance at which Leamington, Warwick, and Kenilworth, lie from each other, and the many objects of historical interest and scenes of impressive beauty with which the intermediate country abounds, will doubtless cause many railway travellers to slip away from Coventry and pay them a visit ; and this must form our apology for having so long detained the reader from the route. We will now, therefore, proceed ; premising, however, that Nuneaton, a town with 7,799 inhabitants, lies eight miles from the station, on the right ; and Hinckley, with a population of 6,491, four miles beyond it.

## CHAPTER IX.

## COVENTRY TO BIRMINGHAM.

Eighteen miles and a quarter.

THE excavation which the reader will remember brought us to the Coventry station, continues for a short distance after leaving it. The first opening presents us with a view of Allesley church and park, seen across the Coventry Lammas ground; and also with the best view which can be obtained from any part of the line of the city of Coventry, with its lofty spires rising majestically from the dense mass of houses. After passing a cutting three parts of a mile in length, we have Hearshall Common on our right, and Crackley Wood on our left. Elsdon-lane then crosses the line, and two slight cuttings bring us to an embankment. The prospect, however, which it affords possesses little interest; and after passing Ten Shilling Wood, and Beech Wood, and crossing the Hockley road, we enter another cutting, which, after we have been carried through Beechwood tunnel, past the tank which supplies the engines with water, and under several bridges, comes to a conclusion, after having extended for the space of a mile. We have scarcely time to regale our eyes with the green fields and waving foliage, or to distinguish the village of Berkswell, which lies at a short distance on the right,



before the sides of another excavation exclude the rural prospect, and drive us again to our own reflections. Of the bridges, which are the only objects to relieve the monotony, the principal is that by which the Kenilworth road is carried over the line. A mile's rapid flight brings us again into the open country, and Wooton Green appears on the left; and presently, from the elevation of an embankment, Balsal Grange is seen in the same direction, and also the church and village of Barston. The landscape improves as we advance, its wide sweep on the left embracing Rigton End, Walsal End, and Escote, with Hampton-in-Arden church, and the distant spire of that of Solihull; whilst, on the right, is an equally interesting view, comprising Mercote Hall, Packington Park, seat of the Earl of Aylesford, the pretty village of Meriden, which stands on the Holyhead road, at a distance of two miles, and the spire of Coleshill church, which can barely be distinguished in the extreme distance. After crossing the Blythe, by a noble viaduct of six arches, the traveller will perceive on his left a group of interesting objects;—a very old and almost ruined bridge, with five arches, forms the centre, whilst a pretty windmill and rich surrounding scenery complete the picture.

### **Hampton-in-Arden Station.**

Distance to London,  $100\frac{1}{2}$ —Birmingham,  $11\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

DISTANCES BY ROADS FROM THIS STATION TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:—

<i>Place W. of Station.</i>		<i>Place E. of Station.</i>
Solihull .. .. .	4 miles.	COLESHILL .. .. . 5 miles.

THE village of Hampton-in-Arden lies on the left of the line, and consists of little besides an ancient looking church, formerly adorned with a lofty spire, but which now lifts a square tower unpretendingly towards heaven. Near the village the Derby and Birmingham Junction Railway will join the London and Birmingham line.

Solihull is about four miles from this station. It is a well built town, standing in a somewhat pleasant situation, on the high road from Birmingham to Warwick, and containing 2,878 inhabitants. The church is a large cruciform structure, with an embattled tower, and octagonal spire.

Coleshill, which is five miles distant from the station, stands upon the brow of a hill, which rises gradually from the south bank of the river Cole. It consists principally of one long street, and one short but wide one, which affords a convenient area for the market place. Its population is 1,853. Its spacious church is an ancient building, in the decorated style, with a lofty tower, surmounted by an octagonal spire. About a mile to the east of the town is Maxtoke Castle, which is in a high state of preservation; and about a mile and a half from the castle, are the remains of Maxtoke Priory, from which there is said to have been a subterranean passage communicating with Coleshill Church, with which, indeed, both the castle and priory appear to be coeval.

After leaving this station, and passing through a considerable cutting, we behold Hampton-in-Arden behind us, the graceful spire of Bickenhill church rising across the fields on the left, and Packington

Park, with the village of Little Packington, on the right. Another short cutting, which is crossed by the Bickenhill bridge, brings us to an embankment, which, however, presents us with no new object of interest. After passing under Marston Hall bridge, we traverse some prettily wooded country, having Marston Wood on the right, and Elmdon Park on the left. After passing Marston Green bridge, we have a good view of the village lying near the line on the right; whilst, in the distance, the spire of Coleshill church continues to form an interesting object. From the Sheldon embankment, which here commences, a prospect is obtained which is considered by many as equal in beauty to any which the line affords: on the right, is Alcot Park, the town and church of Coleshill, and Maxtoke Park; on the left, Elmdon, with its fine rich woodlands, and the pretty village of Sheldon, with the unassuming tower of its little church; whilst, in advance, the high spire of Yardley church rises above the sloping fields, and completes a landscape in which it would certainly be difficult to imagine any alteration which would not be detrimental to its beauty. Proceeding, we pass the hamlet of Makidown on the right, and shortly afterwards a plain brick building called Lea Hall. A short cutting brings us opposite the village of Yardley, in which immense quantities of tiles are manufactured; and after admiring the fine tower and spire of its church, we pass under Stitchford bridge, and perceive the village of Stitchford on the right, surrounded with some interesting foliage. We are now two miles and three quarters from Birmingham, and are able to cast our

eye along the railway as far as the station house ; the line henceforth preserving a perfectly rectilinear course. After passing the intended point of junction of the Derby Railway, and emerging from the Saltley excavation, we obtain an imperfect glimpse of Birmingham, which soon, however, widens into a full and magnificent view. From the vast and dense mass of confused buildings, rise the beautiful spires of its numerous churches, and the tall chimneys of its still more numerous manufactories ; whilst, proudly conspicuous in the centre, the Town Hall majestically lifts its noble front.

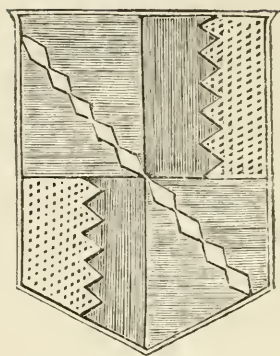
Barr Beacon is now on the right, and also Aston church, park, and hall. Ashted and Vauxhall soon afterwards appear ; and not far distant the Grand Junction Railway is seen stretching away in a northerly direction. The Catholic College on Sutton Coldfield forms a conspicuous object in the distant scenery ; and more adjacent to the line is Duddeston Hall, with its beautiful pleasure grounds. After admiring the noble tier of arches by which the Grand Junction Railway enters Birmingham, we pass along a similar tier ourselves, and arrive at the Birmingham terminus of the London and Birmingham Railway.

The station yard and offices resemble, in all material points, those at Euston Grove ; and the arrangements for entering and leaving the carriages are also similar. The grand entrance is a noble and commanding structure. It is of about the same dimensions as that at Euston Grove, with the exception of being rather deeper, and thus very nearly forming a perfect cube. It has in front four insulated Ionic columns,

and is flanked on each side by an arched entrance. The central entrance, which is also arched, in order to preserve a degree of unity in the design, is closed with lofty doors, and surmounted with two shields, bearing the arms of the city of London and the town of Birmingham.

Upon arriving at the end of our journey, we cannot take a retrospective view of our wonderful flight without deep feelings of astonishment. In five hours and a half we have travelled 112 miles, and swept through seven of the fairest counties in England; and this we have effected by the mighty energy of a little vaporised water. Truly, if sublimity is to be found anywhere in nature, it is where the power of steam is manifested. The mind that can perceive no sublimity in the operations of this tremendous agent, either when revealed in the convulsions of the earthquake, or when putting forth its terrific might in the service of man, is as yet a total stranger to the highest and noblest emotions of the human soul.





## CHAPTER IX.

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### BIRMINGHAM AND ITS MANUFACTURES.

As the second division of this itinerary, namely, that which is intended to form a companion to the Grand Junction Railway, contains an historical and topographical description of the town of Birmingham, it would only occasion needless repetition to insert such a one here. Our endeavour in this chapter, therefore, will be, to bring together a few facts connected with the celebrated MANUFACTURES of this town, which may prove interesting to the stranger, and perhaps furnish him with pleasing and instructive topics for table-talk.

What first strikes the attention of the stranger upon approaching Birmingham, either by railroad or the antiquated coach roads, is the dense cloud of smoke

issuing from its confused mass of buildings, and brooding over it in sullen gloom, as if it were the crater of some vast volcano, or one of the chimneys of the Cyclops' forge. The manner in which this scene is viewed, might, perhaps, furnish a good index to the character of the beholder. Yet, whatever may be the first emotions to which it gives rise, few, we think, can be able to gaze upon it long without feeling elevated and ennobled. Beneath that hemisphere of smoke, the mind of man has put forth its majesty of power, and has gained its mightiest victories. The agent by which it here works is that, the possession of which distinguishes man from the brute, namely, Fire: the material in which it works is that, the knowledge of which chiefly distinguishes civilized man from the savage, namely, Iron.

The Manufactures in Iron, as being those which confer upon Birmingham its principal celebrity, of course demand our first notice. Their early history would lead us far back into the remote and obscure periods of Grecian and Egyptian fable; nor should we then be able to discover anything with certainty respecting their origin. Their introduction into our country is enveloped in similar obscurity; though, from various allusions in Roman authors, it would appear to have been anterior to the invasion of our island by their armies. The mines in the Forest of Dean, which are known to have been in operation in the year 1066, were restrained by the government of the country in 1581, on account of the immense quantities of wood consumed in the smelting of the ore. Shortly afterwards, Lord Dudley made his in-

valuable discovery, that pit-coal would form a fuel in every respect more advantageous than wood ; but, owing to the mad opposition by which this invaluable discovery was met by the ignorant populace, it was not until 1740 that it began to be generally turned to beneficial account. Since that period this manufacture has flourished amazingly ; the same rich treasure house from which the precious mineral itself is drawn, yielding also, by a kind provision of Nature, the fuel by which it is separated from its earthy alloy, and the limestone without which this separation could scarcely be effected. The iron districts around Birmingham are possessed of peculiar advantages with respect to the juxta-position of the various substances required in its manufacture : the iron, the coal, the limestone, and also the clay with which the furnaces are built, being generally found within a few yards from each other. The characteristic excellence of the Staffordshire metal is that of forming admirably fine and sharp castings.

The smelting furnaces are chiefly situated in the neighbourhood of Dudley, in the southern part of the county of Staffordshire. The foundries, where the rough metal is cast into various forms of utility and ornament, are dispersed in different parts of Staffordshire, Shropshire, and Warwickshire ; but the most important are within the town, or in the immediate vicinity of Birmingham. The number of foundries within the town is about twenty-three ; of which, the largest is the Eagle Foundry, in Broad-street. This foundry has been established upwards of three quarters of a century ; and the plan which is now generally

adopted, of testing the iron of which important castings are to be made, has been there systematically pursued for the last fifteen years. The simplest method of performing this operation, is that of raising a bar by one end, and striking it across the edge of an anvil at the centre of percussion ; although there are other tests of a much severer character than this to which it is frequently subjected.

Upon coming from the foundry, most of the iron which has to be further manufactured, goes to the engineers to be employed in the construction of steam engines and other massive machinery, or to the metal rolling mills, in order to be reduced into thin plates. Of the establishments for the manufacture of heavy machinery, the works of Boulton and Watt, at Soho, of course take the lead. The partnership of these two celebrated engineers commenced in the year 1759. The unequalled machines, and other articles of hardware which they have sent forth from their workshops, have carried their fame to the most distant regions of the earth ; and the improvements which they have effected in whatever they have taken in hand, and especially in the construction of the steam engine, have surrounded their names with an imperishable lustre.

In order to render the stubborn metals serviceable to the platers, button makers, and various other manufacturers, it is necessary that they should be reduced into thin plates of uniform thickness. This is done in the ponderous Metal Rolling Mills, in the operations of which we behold a tremendously powerful agency, guided with astonishing precision, to the performance of an almost incredible work.

The Platers bestow the requisite form upon the articles which they manufacture by means of stamps; finishing them, when necessary, with a punch and hammer. The stock of die-moulds, which this system renders it necessary to keep on hand, is immense: some of the factories possess no fewer than 300,000, all of different patterns. This manufacture can be witnessed with the greatest facility at the works of Messrs. Collis and Co., in Church-street; and we would particularly call the attention of the stranger to this establishment, as he may there also witness the manufacture of guns, medals, buttons, and various kinds of jewellery; and may examine, in the extensive show-rooms, a magnificent collection of the choicest specimens of Birmingham art, in all its departments. The productions of the sister manufactories of Sheffield may be advantageously viewed in connexion with those of Birmingham, by persons inclined to institute a comparison between them, at the show rooms of Mapplebeck and Lowe, in the Bull-ring, and of Edwards and Ball, in High-street; and we certainly do not think that the opportunity of making such a comparison ought to be neglected by the intelligent visiter who is in search of amusement combined with instruction. Of metallic buildings for horticultural purposes, Messrs. Daft and Son, of Paradise-street, and Mr. Thomas Clark, of Lionel-street, are the principal manufacturers. Those erected by Mr. Clark, in the Botanic Gardens, at Edgbaston, are well worthy of inspection. The conservatory is composed entirely of metal and glass, and is a beautiful specimen of the taste and skill which is now displayed in this branch of art.



Of all the remaining manufactures, that of steel pens is perhaps the most interesting. These little substitutes for the grey goose quill are made by means of a standing press, and another little machine which rounds the nibs and cuts the slits. They are afterwards polished by mutual attrition caused by agitation in an eccentrically revolving cylinder. In the manufacture of this apparently insignificant article, upwards of one hundred tons of steel are annually consumed, and a vast number of hands constantly employed. Owing to the rapidity with which it has sprung into importance, a vast influx of wealth has been the consequence to the fortunate speculators who were the first to enter the field. One individual has lately reared a gigantic factory on Newhall-hill, and calculates that he manufactures upwards of thirty-six millions of pens every year.

Japanning is another staple manufacture of Birmingham; and its productions, in this branch of art, already bid fair to rival their oriental archetypes in fancifulness of design and brilliancy of ornament. The show-rooms of the principal japanners will carry the visiter back, in imagination, to the gorgeous halls of Arabian fable, adorned, not by the art and labour of man, but, by the creative power of invisible genii.

This cursory survey of the leading manufactures will be sufficient to give the stranger a general idea of their character. They are of that class which has raised England to her exalted rank among the nations; and the practical traveller will here find more objects worthy of engaging his attention than he would probably do during a three months' tour through the most famed cities of the continent. All knowledge is here

rendered practical. The antiquarian comes from the sacred vales of Greece and Italy, laden with designs of classic elegance, grace, and beauty, to enrich the pattern book of the plater and founder. The chemist issues forth from his laboratory to show what effect the agents with which he is conversant will have upon the various metals made use of, and what alloys can be advantageously substituted for more expensive materials; and the mathematician descends from his abstract speculations to regulate the construction of machinery, and furnish the engineer with infallible data. In short, Art here holds her imperial court, and the magician Science bows in obsequious vassalage. At her command he waves his potent wand, and nature owns her authority, and the elements murmur submission to her sway; Earth opens to her his hidden treasures; Fire pours at her feet the purified riches; Water, reconciled to his bitterest foe, puts forth his latent power, and places at her disposal his gigantic and hitherto undiscovered energies; whilst Air affords her his tribute of service, by wafting her merchandise from land to distant land, as far as the swelling waves of ocean have ever rolled.

For further information respecting the history, topography, and famed manufactures of this town, we must refer our reader to the "Picture of Birmingham,"—a picture which possesses qualities which no artist has ever been able to communicate to his most elaborate productions; as it unites the brilliancy, faithfulness, and animation, of the camera obscura, with the miraculous properties of the Italian necromancer's mirror, across which visions of the past, and

shadows of the future, were wont to flit;—and we will content ourselves with giving the following list of a very few of its numerous manufacturers:—

## PRINCIPAL SHOW ROOMS AND MANUFACTORIES.

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Soho, Handsworth.

### BRASS FOUNDERS.

Anderton, W., and Sons, 6, Whittall-street.  
 Barber, J., and Green, 15, Newhall-street.  
 Bourn, John, 31, Lionel-street.  
 Docker, Thomas, and Sons, Whittall-street.  
 Heaton, Ralph, 70 and 71, Bath-street.  
 Horn, Thomas, Temple-row.  
 Lingham Brothers, 170, Little Hampton-street.  
 Messenger, Thomas, and Sons, 22, Broad-street.  
 Ratcliff, J. and E., St. Paul's Square.  
 Simcox, Pemberton, and Co., 42, Livery-street.  
 Smith, Timothy, and Sons, 4, Bartholomew-street.  
 Standley, James, 43, Staniforth-street.  
 Swift, James, 7, Whittall-street.  
 Winfield, R. W., Cambridge-street.

### BRITISH PLATE MANUFACTURERS.

Brown and Ball, Paradise-street.  
 Evans and Askin, George-street, Sand Pits.  
 Merry and Co., Cherry-street.  
 Sturges and Son, 26, Lichfield-street.

### BUTTON MANUFACTURERS.

Armfield, Edward, Newhall-street.  
 Aston, J., St. Paul's Square.  
 Bartleet, T., and Sons, 126, Great Gharles-street.  
 Elliott, W., Frederick-street, Regent-street.  
 Hammond, Turner, and Sons, Snow-hill.  
 Hardman, J., and Co., 12, Paradise-street.  
 Jennens and Co., Old Meeting-house-yard, Deritend.  
 Ledsam, Thomas, and Sons, 10, Great Charles-street.

Smith, C. F., 14, Newhall-street.

Steadman, R. Jun., 35, Edmund-street.

#### CUT AND PLAIN GLASS MANUFACTURERS.

Bedford, Sarah, and Co., 16, New-street.

Henderson, (Stainer of Glass,) New-street.

Price, High-street.

Rollason, Thomas, (Manufacturer to the Royal Family,) Steel-house lane.

Osler, F. and C., Broad-street.

#### GLASS WORKS.

Bacchus and Green, Union Glass Works, Dartmouth-street.

Gammon, W., and Co., Belmont Glass Works, Great Brook-street.

Goold and Co., Ætna Glass Works, Broad-street.

Harris, Rice, Islington Glass Works, Sheepcote-street, Broad-street.

Thomson and Shaw, Bagot-street.

#### GUN AND PISTOL MAKERS.

Busby, J., 30½, New-street.

Dugard, R., 29, Whittall-street.

Jones, Charles, 16, Whittall-street.

Meredith, H., and Son, 48, St. Paul's Square.

Powell, W., 49, High-street.

Pritchard, W., 135, New street.

Redfern, B., Caroline-street.

Richards, Westley, 82, High-street.

Sargant and Son, 74, Edmund-street.

Wheeler, R., and Son, 27, Snow-hill.

#### HOthouse and Horticultural Building Constructors— METALLIC AND COPPER SASH MANUFACTURERS.

Clark, Thomas, Jun., 55, Lionel-street.

Daft, Thomas, and Son, Town Hall Foundry, Paradise-street.

#### IRON FOUNDERS.

Boulton, Watt, and Co., Soho.

Capper, Charles Henry, Broad-street.

Jones, George, Phoenix Foundry, Snow-hill.

Jones, Thomas, and Sons, Bradford-street.

Mole, T. and W., Pagoda Works, Bordesley.—Show Rooms,  
Smithfield.

Smith and Hawkes, Eagle Foundry, Broad-street.

### MALLEABLE IRON FOUNDERS.

Clive and Cardall, 50, Staniforth-street.

### JAPANNERS.

Bill, R. and G., 14, Summer-lane.

Jennens and Bettridge, (Paper Tray Makers to her Majesty,) 99,  
Constitution-hill.

Lane, Thomas, Great Hampton-street.

Room, James, 28, Summer-row.

### JEWELLERS, SILVERSMITHS, AND EMPORIUMS FOR EVERY DESCRIPTION OF CUTLERY, PLATED WARES, &c.

Soho Plate Company, Handsworth.

Collis, G. R., Church-street.

Edwards, Ball, and Co., 82, High-street.

Mapplebeck and Lowe, Bull Ring.

### LAMP, CHANDELIER, CANDELABRA, LUSTRE, &c., MANUFACTURERS.

Aspinall, T., 33, Lower Temple street.

Blakeway, John, Edgbaston-street.

Blakeway, Thomas William, Broad-street.

Messenger, Thomas, and Sons, Broad-street.

Osler, Follett, Broad-street, Islington.

Plipson and Evans, Newhall-street.

Ratcliff, John and Charles, 140, Suffolk-street.

Salt, Thomas Clutton, 17 and 18, Edmund-street.

Smith, Timothy, and Sons, 4, Bartholomew-street.

### METAL ROLLERS.

Cooke, Roome, and Harley, Fazeley-street.

Muntz, George Frederick, Water-street.

Plipson, William, Fazeley-street.

Union Rolling Mills, Cambridge-street.

### PIN MAKERS.

Plipson, T., and Sons, Broad-street.

Latham and Kilmister, Lancaster-street.



## PLATERS, AND MANUFACTURERS OF SILVER AND PLATED WARES.

Collis, G. R., Church-street.

Dixon, Matthew, 137, Snow-hill.

Parker, J., and Sons, 23½, Summer-row.

Parker, John Frederick, 72, High-street.

Ryland, William, 167, Great Charles-street.

Soho Plate Company, Soho.

Spooner, Painter, and Co., 12, New Market-st., Great Charles-st.

Waterhouse and Son, 22, Hill-street.

Wilkinson, Thomas, and Co., 15, Great Hampton-street.

Willmore and Co., Bread-street.

## STEAM ENGINE MANUFACTURERS.

Boulton and Watt, Soho, Handsworth.

Capper, C. H., Broad-street.

Donaldson and Glasgow, 53, Suffolk-street.

Smith and Hawkes, Eagle Foundry, Broad-street.

Jones, George, Phœnix Foundry, Snow-hill and Lionel-street.

Penn, Samuel, Great Lister Street Steam Mill.

## SCREW MANUFACTURERS.

James, J., Bradford-street.

Ledsam, Messrs., Edmund-street.

Ryland, H., Oozell-street, Broad-street.

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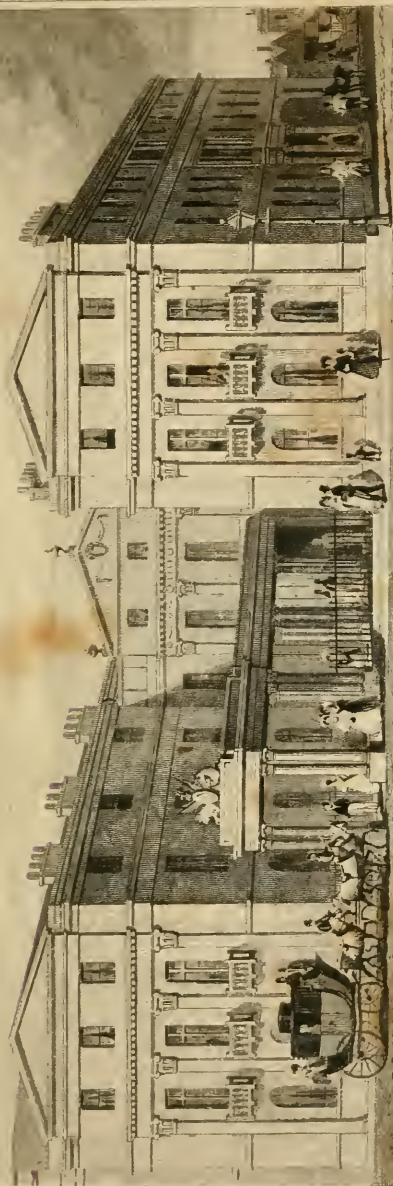
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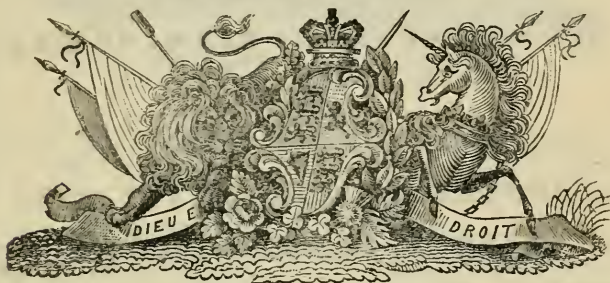




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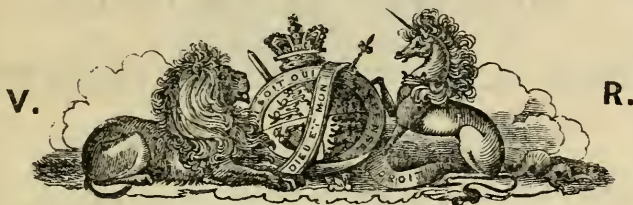
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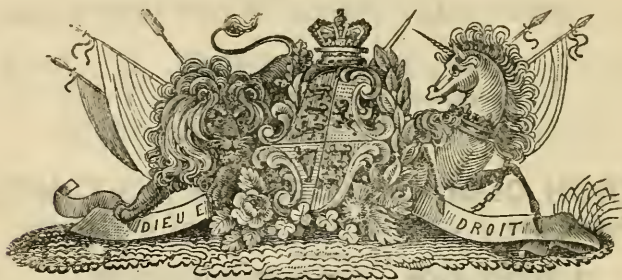
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With the greatest deference submits to the attention of his Friends and the Public the subjoined Documents, as flattering Testimonies of the high estimation in which the above very superior and much approved Articles are held:—

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“Sir John Conroy is honoured with the DUCHESS OF KENT’s command to acquaint Mr. Farmer, that he has permission to use Her Royal Highness’s Name and Arms, as Manufacturer of Permanent Elastic Spring Hygeian Beds to Her Royal Highness.

“Malvern, Sept. 13, 1830.”

“Sir John Conroy is to acknowledge the receipt of the Bed and Mattress of Mr. R. Farmer’s invention, which he has made for the PRINCESS VICTORIA; and Sir John is commanded by the DUCHESS OF KENT to express her Royal Highness’s highest approval of the principle of his Mattresses, Cushions, &c.

“Kensington Palace, Dec. 17, 1830.

“*Mr. Richard Farmer, &c., &c.*”

*From* CONGREVE SELWYN, ESQ., *Surgeon of the Ledbury Dispensary.*

“MR. CONGREVE SELWYN, Surgeon of the Ledbury Dispensary, begs to offer his Testimony of the value of Mr. Farmer’s invention of his Elastic Mattresses and Cushions. The one he has sent to Mr. Selwyn, answers all the purposes for an Invalid, and is particularly serviceable where the patient suffers from hectic fever and night perspirations.

“Ledbury, May 2, 1834.

“*Mr. Richard Farmer, &c., &c.*”

*From* SIR WILLIAM B. CAVE, BART.

“Stretton, Atherstone, July 22, 1835.

“SIR WM. B. CAVE has much satisfaction in informing Mr. Richard Farmer, that the Elastic Steel Spring Bed which he purchased from Mr. F. has fully answered every expectation he had formed of it. Sir W. C. lay upon it for five months, without ever being able to be moved in the least from it, and for the last six months has not been removed from it for more than two hours at a time, and is now as perfect in the elasticity and strength of the springs as when he received it from Mr. Farmer. Sir W. Cave’s weight is sixteen stone and upwards. Dr. Palmer, of Birmingham, who has been in the habit of attending Sir W. Cave for many years, gave it as his opinion, that, had he been lying on a bed of any other description, the consequences would have been very serious.

“*Mr. Richard Farmer, &c., &c.*”

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